

The SUMM of RELIGION by
Sir Matthew Hale Late Lord
Chief Justice of ENGLAND.

I. HE that fears the LORD of HEAVEN and EARTH, and
Walks Humbly before HIM.

II. That Thankfully lays hold on the Message of Redemp-
tion by JESUS CHRIST, That strives to Express his Thank-
fulness by the Sincerity of his Obedience.

III. That is Sorry with all his Soul, when he comes short
of his Duty.

IV. That walks watchfully in the denial of himself, and
does not yield to any Lust or known Sin.

V. He that if he falls in the least measure, is restless till he
has made his Peace by true Repentance.

VI. That is true in his Promises, just in his Dealings, Charita-
ble to the Poor, Sincere in his Devotion.

VII. That will not deliberately dishonour GOD, altho' with
the greatest Security from Temporal Punishment.

VIII. That hath his hopes and his Conversation in HEAVEN.

IX. That dares not do any thing unjustly; altho' never so
much to his Advantage, and all this, because he firmly believes
in HIM, that is INVISIBLE, and fears HIM, because he Loves
HIM, fears HIM, as well for his GOODNESS as his GREAT-
NESS: Such a Man whether he be an Episcoparian, or Pres-
byterian, or Independant, or Baptist. Whether he wears a
Surplice or wears none, whether he hears Organs, or hears
none, whether he kneels at the Communion, or for Conscience
sake stands or sits, he hath the Life of Religion in him, and will
conform his Soul to the IMAGE of his SAVIOUR, and that
Life Acts in him, and goes along with him to ETERNITY. Not-
withstanding his Practice or Non practice of things Indifferent.

On the other side if a Man fears not the ETERNAL GOD,
commits Sin with presumption, can drink to Excess, Lye, Swear
Vainly and Falsly, live loosely, break his Promises; Such a Man
altho' he cry down Bishops, or cry down Presbytery, altho' he
be rebaptiz'd every day, or declaim against it as Heresy, altho'
he fast all the Lent or Feast out of pretence of avoiding Super-
stition; yet notwithstanding these and a Thousand more Ex-
ternal Conformities, or Zealous Oppositions of them, he Wants
the LIFE of RELIGION.

Carlton

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Practical Discourse
OF
Regeneration
OR, A
WORD to SINNERS,
AND A
WORD to SAINTS.
THE

Former tending to the Awakening the
Consciences of secure Sinners unto a
lively Sense and Apprehension of the
dreadful Condition they are in, so
long as they live in their natural and
unregenerate Estate.

The *Latter* tending to the Directing
and Persuading of the Godly and Re-
generate unto several singular Duties.

Fitted to the Weakest Capacity.

By the late Reverend and truly Catho-
lic Mr. THO. GOUGE.

L O N D O N,

Printed for the Publick Good, 1711.

*An Abstract of a Character of the truly
Pious and Charitable Mr. Tho. Gouge,
from Archbishop Tillotson's Sermon at
his Funeral.*

OF his Piety towards God, which is the necessary Foundation of all other Graces and Vertues; I shall only say this, that it was great and exemplary, but yet very still and quiet, without stir or noise, and much more in substance and reality than in shew and ostentation; and did not consist in censuring and finding fault with others, but in the due care and government of his own Life and Actions, and in exercising himself continually to have a Conscience void of offence, toward God and toward Men: in which he was such a proficient, that even after long Acquaintance and familiar Conversation with him, it was not easy to observe any thing that might deserve Blame. He particularly excell'd in the more peculiar Vertues of Conversation, in *Modesty, Humility, Meekness, Cheerfulness*, and in *Kindness and Charity towards all Men.*



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To my dearly beloved Friends the Inhabitants
of St. Sepulchres Parish, London.

Beloved Friends,

TO further the Salvation of Mens Souls, as it is a
most excellent Work, so it ought to be the Study
and endeavour both of every Christian in his Place and
Calling, and especially of the Ministers of the Gospel
whose Office and Function calls upon them more impor-
tunately to labour therein. Now since Regeneration
is absolutely necessary to Salvation, and that there
can be no entrance into the new Jerusalem without a
new Birth, I have, according to that ability which the
Lord hath given me, set forth in this small Treatise
the nature and necessity of Regeneration, together
with the Means on your part to be performed for the
better attaining thereof.

Most of these Truths have been preached in your
hearing, and now they are presented to your sight, that
thereby you may be put in remembrance of them, and
more thoroughly affected with them. Though I cease
to be your Minister, yet I shall not cease to do what
in me lieth to further your eternal happiness. It was
my hearty desire of your everlasting welfare that first
put me upon preaching on this Subject: and the like de-
sire hath engaged me to present the same to your view.

Herein have I set before you Heaven and Hell, hap-
piness and Misery. Oh that you would be so wise as to
choose Heaven rather than Hell, Happiness rather than
Misery.

That I should adventure these Notes into the World
is not out of any conceit that there is any thing extra-
ordinary in them but merely out of that strong affe-
ction I bear to your Souls welfare; For my hearts de-
sire for you is, that you may be saved: and will the
Lord but bless this small Treatise to the Regeneration
or Edification of any of your Souls, I have the end of
all my pains and cost.

The Epistle Dedicatory.

Avoiding all affectation of words, I have used plainness of speech: it being always my chief design in the whole-course of my Ministry, to affect the Hearts and Consciences of my Hearers, rather than to tickle their Ears, and please their Fancy.

That I may not detain you longer, I shall close this Epistle with three Requests unto you.

1. That you kindly accept of this small Book, which treats on a Subject so necessary to your everlasting Happiness.

2. That you would be pleased as to peruse it your selves; so to take some time to read it to your families. If you cannot find leisure on the Week-days, then to read some part thereof on each Lord's day, till you have read it through.

3. That you would not lock it up in your Closets, but suffer it to lie in your Houses, where your Children and Servants may peruse it as they find opportunity. Who knoweth how successful and fruitful this plain Treatise may prove, if the Lord shall be pleased to accompany it with his blessing.

That the Lord therefore would so bless these my poor and weak endeavours, that such as are yet in their natural state may be converted, that Converts may be improved and built up in that Grace wherein they stand, is the unfeigned Desire and hearty Prayer of

Your Servant in the Work
of the Gospel, who hath
been, and still is, desirous
of your spiritual welfare.

Mar. 10.
1688.

THO. GOUGE.

J O H N.

John, 3. 1, 2, 3.

1. There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus a ruler of the Jews.
2. The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God; for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him.
3. Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God.

C H A P. I.

The Exposition and Observations arising out of the first and second Verses.

FROM the beginning of this third Chapter, to the 22d. Verse, is set forth the Conference between our blessed Saviour and Nicodemus; in which are three things observable.

1. A Description of Nicodemus, verse 1.

2. The occasion of the Conference, which was Nicodemus his Coming unto Christ, expressed, ver. 2.

3. The Conference it self, from verse 3. to 22.

I. Nicodemus is thus described, verse 1. There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. He is here set forth,

1. By his Name, Nicodemus, which is distinctly set down, as for the Truth of the History, so for the Honour of the Man. It is observable, that in the holy Scriptures there is most care of setting down the Names of good Men, that have in their life-time, some way or other, set forth God's Glory, & made themselves Examples worthy of imitation; For God will honour such as honour him; he will have their memorial blessed. As therefore we desire to have our memorial blessed, let us now labour to honour God in our several Places, Callings, Conditions and Relations, by a conscionable discharge of the Duties be-

The Exposition of the

longing to them: and then we may rest assured, God will, some way or other, honour us.

2. *By his Sect.* He is expressly said to be a *Man of the Pharisees*, who were a select Sect among the *Jews*, of highest account for their seeming Sanctity and strict Profession, whereas in truth they were very *Hypocrites*; for, *they did all to be seen of men*, Matth. 23. 1. Which because Christ discovered, and made known to the People, they proved his greatest Enemies and Persecutors.

3. *By his Office.* It's in general said, that he was a *Ruler of the Jews*. Which is not to be taken, as if he were the only, or chief Governour of the *Jews*, but to shew, that he was none of the common sort, but one of those who had Authority and Government amongst the *Jews*.

It is observable that few of the *Pharisees* and *Rulers* received Christ's Doctrine, and believed on him, as appears by their own expression, Joh. 7. 48. *Have any of the Rulers, or of the Pharisees, believed on him?* which interrogation importeth a strong Negation; implying, that none or few of the *Rulers* or *Pharisees* believed on Christ. They were so puffed up with the pride of their high places, so swoln with conceitedness of their strict Profession and seeming Sanctity, and so possess'd with prejudice against the spiritual and heavenly Doctrine of Christ, that their hearts boiled with much envy & indignation against him, and thereupon sought many ways to entrap & enslave him: yea, out of very malice they thirsted after his Blood, and never ceased till they took away his Life. Yet here we find one, who was both a *Pharisee* and a *Ruler*, become a *Disciple of Jesus Christ*, whom Christ instructeth as in the Doctrine of Regeneration, so in other main Principles of Religion, and thereupon became a true believer; whence we may observe.

Obs.

Observe. That the Dew of God's Grace often falleth on the most graceless; That the greatest of Sinners are oftentimes received to mercy, and embraced in the Arms of free Grace.

This God doth, as for the magnifying the Riches of his Grace, so for the encouraging great and notorious Sinners to return from their Sins, and to look up unto him for Mercy. For, are the greatest Sinners oftentimes received to Mercy? then there is hope of Mercy for thee, how many and heinous soever thy Sins are. *St Paul* speaking of God's Mercy to him, who was not only an heinous Sinner, but the chief of Sinners, declareth how God sheweth Mercy to him, that he might be a ground of hope, and encouragement unto other great and heinous Sinners: *For this cause* (saith he) *1 Tim. I. 16. I obtain'd mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all long suffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting.* Intimating, that one special end Christ aimed at, in shewing Mercy to such a Sinner as himself, was to stir up, and encourage other great and heinous Sinners to go unto Christ, and that with hope of acceptance, casting themselves and the burden of their Sins upon him: Yea, questionless the Conversion of so many notorious Sinners is recorded in Scripture, not only as a memorial of what God hath done for others, but also as a sign and token what he is now ready and willing to do for the greatest Sinners upon their turning from their Sins unto him by unfeigned Repentance, and closing with Jesus Christ, by a true & lively Faith. Oh therefore let those admirable and stupendious patterns of Mercy held forth in Scripture, be encouragements unto thee to abandon thy Sins, to turn over a new leaf, and to close with Jesus Christ, upon the Terms of the Gospel!

II. *The occasion of the Conference betwixt Christ and Nicodemus, followeth in ver. 2. and that was, his coming unto Christ; which is amplified farther by the time when he came, and that was, by night: The same came to Jesus by night. Nicodemus his going unto Christ for farther instruction in the way and means of Salvation, did evidence the truth of his Faith, but his going by night did evidence the weakness of his Faith. He believed upon the hearing Christ preach, and seeing the Miracles which he wrought, that he was a Teacher sent from God: yet because he was a Pharisee and a Ruler, thought it a disgrace to go openly unto Christ to be instructed by him; but went by night, and thereby discovered the weakness of his Faith; whence we may observe:*

Obj. True Faith may be exceeding weak. This title obye of little Faith! wherewith Christ often upbraided his Disciples, is an evident proof thereof: So likewise that expression of the poor Man, who cried out unto Christ, Lord, I believe, help thou my unbelief. The former word, I believe, sheweth the truth of his Faith; but the latter word, unbelief, sheweth the weakness of his Faith, which was so weak, that he calls it unbelief.

Art thou conscious to thy self of the weakness of thy Faith?

1. *Be thankful unto God for that measure and degree which thou hast, though it be but as a Grain of Mustard seed for quantity; for the least Dram of true Faith is of greater value than Mountains of Gold and Silver.*

2. *Content not thy self with a small measure of Faith; or contentedness with a weak Faith, is an Argument of no Faith: and besides, the greater and stronger Faith is, the greater and stronger will be thy comfort & Consolation. For the stronger thy Faith*

is,

First and Second Verses.

is, the clearer will thy apprehension be of thine Interest in Christ, and of the Pardon of thy sins, in and through the Merits of his Death and Passion; the more virtue and strength wilt thou draw from Christ for the mortifying thy Lusts, and for the quickning thy Graces; yea, with the greater cheerfulness wilt thou go on in thy Christian course.

3. *Labour and strive after a great measure and degree of Faith*, to grow from Faith to Faith, from one degree of Faith unto another, till thou attain unto the highest degree thereof, even to a full assurance. To this End, be earnest with God in Prayer for the increase of thy Faith; for every Grace depends upon Him, not only for birth, but also for growth and increase: but of this Grace of Faith, he is in a special manner stiled as the *Author*, so the *Finisher* thereof, *Heb. 12. 2.*

Though thy Faith at present be weak, yet know to thy comfort, that the weakest Faith, if true and sincere, is sufficient to Salvation: For though God giveth not to all Believers a like measure and degree of Faith, but to some more to others less; yet he giveth to none of his less than may suffice to their Salvation; So that the least Faith hath this in it, *that it is sufficient to Salvation*, in that it doth interest us in Christ, & in all the Promises of the Gospel.

III. The Conference it self follows, which is a Dialogue between *Nicodemus* and our *Blessed Saviour*; wherein *Nicodemus* begins, saying, *Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God; for no man can do these miracles which thou doest, except God be with him.* Wherein we may observe.

I. The Title he giveth to our *Saviour* *Rabbi*, which signifieth *Master*, and so our Evangelist expoundeth it, *Joh. 1. 38.* This Title rightly taken in its proper sense, is due only to Christ, who is the great Prophet

And Teacher that came from God, as Nicodemus here acknowledgeth. Whence we may observe :

Obs. That Jesus Christ is the great Prophet and Teacher of his Church, being alone able to declare his Father's will, and to open the Mysteries of the Gospel. And indeed all other Prophets were but Types of this great Prophet. He lay in the Bosom of his Father, and so understood the Mind and Will of God, and was thereby enabled to make known the Oracles of God, and the Mysteries of Salvation. To him let us give ear and hearken, Preaching unto us both in his Gospel and by his Ministers, who make known unto us the Mysteries of the Gospel.

II. The next thing that followeth in the Confession, is, *the profession which Nicodemus maketh of Christ: We know (saith he) that thou art a teacher come from God; for no man can do these miraeles that thou doest, except God be with him.* In which we may observe.

1. The Profession it self; *We know that thou art a Teacher come from God.*

2. The Reason thereof in the next words; *For no man can do these Miracles that thou dost except God be with him.* As if he said, Whosoever worketh Miracles, cometh from God: but thou workest Miracles, therefore thou comest from God. This Clause, *these Miracles thou doest*, carrieth a great Emphasis, and sheweth that they were very great Miracles which Christ did, & so confirm the Argument the more, this Reason is found, and affordeth this point of Doctrine.

Obs. *Miracles cannot be wrought but by divine Power* For Miracles after the Order and Course of Nature; which none can do, but he which hath appointed and set that order, namely God. I will not insist on this, that I may hasten to that which I mainly intend in this Treatise.

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Third Verse.

C H A P. II.

The Exposition and Observation arising out of v. 3.

IN *ver. 3.* follows Christ's Answer to *Nicodemus*, which is continued to *ver. 22.* In which Christ first declareth *the necessity of Regeneration* in these words; *Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.*

Before we come to the substance of Christ's Discourse, observe we *his manner of entertaining Nicodemaus.*

You have heard from the foregoing Verses; that *Nicodemus* was both a *Pharisee* and a *Ruler*, both which sort of Men most of all opposed Christ. And you have heard of his weakness, how thro' fear and shame, *he went to Christ by night*, being loth to be seen with him: yet Christ rejects him not, but kindly entertains him, and instructs him in such Points whereof he was ignorant, tho' they were fundamental Points necessary to Salvation. Whence we may observe:

Obs. Christ is ready to entertain those that in truth and uprightness seek unto him; tho' their weaknesses and infirmities are many. He rejecteth not such as are weak in Faith, for their weakness. We read in the History of the Gospel, that when Christ lived upon the earth, he rejected none who came unto him in uprightness of heart. Some indeed went away of themselves, but he turned away none. Only he seemed once not to regard *the Woman of Canaan*; but why; surely not out of any purpose or intent to reject her, or turn her away, but only to make known the greatness and strength of her Faith: for in the close Christ saith unto her, *O Woman! great is thy Faith*, Mat. 15. 28. And can any imagine, that now Christ is in Heaven, he hath

The Exposition of the

not the same bowels of compassion towards those that come unto him, which he had when he was upon the Earth? Questionless tho' he be there free from passion, yet not from compassion towards weak Believers. That which was long before prophesied of him by *Ch. 42. 3.* ever was, and will be found true in him; namely, *A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench:* that is, he shall not deal roughly and rigorously with weak Christians, such as are weak in Grace, but mildly and gently.

For the end of Christ's coming was, *to seek and save that which was lost*, Luk. 19. 10. And can we imagine that Christ, who seeketh after those who go away from him, will reject any who do in Truth seek after him?

What encouragement should this be unto all poor Believers, how weak soever their Faith is, to go unto Christ, as for the strengthening their weak Faith, so for the subduing their strong Lusts, and for the reviving their drooping Souls! For your further encouragement, you have Christ's gracious invitation, Mat. 11. 28. *Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.* Hath he bid thee come, and will he reject thee when thou comest? Hath he called, Come ye holy ones, come ye righteous ones, come ye strong ones, and you only shall have rest? Hath he not invited the weak, and the weary also, the drooping and fainting Soul? Go, poor weak Soul, go unto Christ; behold! he calleth thee! go unto him, and thou maist expect thy cure. Questionless, one special reason why Christ shewed himself so willing and ready to hearken to the cry of those who came unto him for the cure of their bodily Distempers, when he was upon the Earth, and to heal
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the same, was to stir us up to go unto him for the healing of all our spiritual Maladies and Diseases. For Christ came not into the world to heal Bodies, but Souls; and therefore, when the Name *Jesus* was given him, the reason is said to be this, *Because he shall save his People from their sins*, Mat. 1. 21. Not their Bodies from Sickneses, but their Souls from Sins.

Art thou bound under any spiritual Infirmities? Do as those sick and diseased persons did when Christ was upon the Earth, who are said to go unto him in Faith, believing he was both able and willing to cure them; whereby they drew virtue from him for their healing.

Art thou troubled for the weakness of thy Faith, complaining thou hast no assurance of *thine Interest in Christ*, no assurance of *the pardon of thy sins*? Go unto Christ by Prayer for increase of Faith, believing that he is as able, so willing to strengthen thy weak Faith: and fear not, thou shalt find such measure of strength added to thee as Christ seeth best, and as shall be sufficient for thee.

Art thou sensible of the working and stirring of corruption in thee, fearing lest it should get dominion over thee? Lay hold on that promise, *Rom. 6. 14. Sin shall not have dominion over you*; and in confidence of his faithfulness that spake it, apply thyself to Christ by Prayer for his making good that good word to thee, and then stand still and see the Salvation of God. Lust, as strong as 'tis, will not be able to stand before the Prayer of Faith: only be careful, that when thou hast made thy Prayer, thou set a watch. Art thou assaulted with the Temptations of Satan, and fearest that he may get the Victory over thee? Go unto Christ by Prayer for strength and support against them: belie-

believing there is, as a power in Christ, so a willingness in him to succour and strengthen thee, and thou shalt be sure to find, if not deliverance from Temptations, yet Grace sufficient to resist them, and Power to overcome them.

Lastly, Art thou troubled with an hard and obdurate Heart? with a filthy and unclean heart? with a worldly and covetous Heart? with a proud and barren Heart? Go unto Christ by Prayer, believing there is, as a power, so a willingness in him, to mollifie thine hard and obdurate Heart; to purifie thy filthy and unclean Heart; to spiritualize thy worldly and covetous Heart; to humble thy proud Heart; to make fruitful thy barren Heart. And doubt not but thou shalt find thine hard and obdurate Heart in some measure softned, thy filthy and unclean Heart in some measure purified, thy worldly & covetous heart in some measure spiritualiz'd, thy proud Heart in some measure humbled, thy barren Heart in some measure made fruitful.

And certainly one special reason why many go drooping and groaning so long under the bondage of Corruption, under the weight and burden of their spiritual Maladies and Diseases, is, because they do not go unto Christ by Prayer for freedom from the same, or through the weakness of their Faith, they do not believe that Christ is, as able, so willing to help and deliever them. For what Christ said to the poor man who came unto him in behalf of his possessed Child, the same he saith to thee, *If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth*, Mark 9. 23.

Obj. Some are apt to say, *I have often gone unto Christ by Prayer, earnestly begging of him to strengthen my weak Graces, to subdue my strong Lusts and Corruptions, to mollifie my hard Heart, &c. but I cannot*

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cannot pray in Faith, I cannot believe that he is, as able, so willing to grant my requests.

Ans. 1. *Thou mayest pray in Faith, even then when thou thinkest thou dost not believe.* Weak Christians are often mistaken here, supposing that if they be not confidently persuaded that God will hear them, they do not pray in Faith: Whereas it is not a confidence that God will hear us, but a dependence upon Christ in hope of audience, that is our sweet evidence of Faith in Prayer. Thou sayest thou prayest and prayest, but canst not be persuaded that the Holy God will hear the Prayers of such a vile & unworthy wretch, and thereupon concludest that thou dost not pray in Faith. But let me ask thee, *Dost thou offer up thy Prayers in the Name of Christ? dost thou depend upon him in hope of an Answer for his sake.* This is praying in Faith.

2. *Mourn and weep for the weakness of thy Faith.*

3. *Be earnest with God in Prayer, that he would strengthen it.*

4. *Know that thy corruption neither is, nor will be utterly destroyed, so long as thou livest here in this World; neither will thy spiritual Maladies and Diseases be quite cured; but they do, and will continue in some measure and degree, partly to bring down thy pride, which of all Sins is the most odious and abominable unto God; and to advance thy humility, which of all Graces is most pleasing and acceptable unto God: and partly that thou mayest have frequent occasion of going unto God by Prayer for help and strength against the power of thy Lusts and Corruptions.*

5. *Know, that power against Sin, increase of Grace, an humble, tender, clean heart, are Mercies, as worth the praying for, so worth the waiting for.* Christ's delays are no denials: thou canst not say he will not, because yet he hath not given thee thy desire.

Be not weary of seeking, in due season thou shalt reap, if thou faint not.

Before I leave this Point, I shall add one word by way of Caution. Beware thou mistake not thy self.

Take not thy self to be one of *little Faith*, whilst thou hast *no Faith*. Let not unbelievers catch at the comforts and encouragements that belong to the least of Saints; that which is their Meat, will be thy Poyson. Comforts falsely applied, tho' they be sweet in the Mouth, will prove curses in the Belly. Hast thou no Faith? O tremble! this is the word that belongs to thee, *He that believeth not, shall be damned*, Mark 16.16. Tho' *to him that hath shall be given*, yet *to him that hath not, shall be taken away, even that which he seemeth to have*.

He that hath the least Faith, is a resolved Enemy of all Sin; a resolved Friend of Holiness, is resolved to hang upon Christ, to cleave unto Christ, to follow him to the Death in Righteousness and Holiness of Life, tho' he still do question whether Christ be his or no.

Is it not thus with thee? Beware how thou catch at the forementioned Comforts. Yet, this let me say to thee also: If thou hast not Faith, wilt thou go to Christ for Faith? If thou canst not go unto Christ *as a Believer*, wilt thou go to him *as a Sinner*? If thou art not yet in a state of Salvation, art thou willing to be saved? Art thou willing to learn of Christ, to ask his Counsel, *What must I do to be saved?* Wilt thou go thus to Christ, *Lord, comest thou not into the world to save sinners?* *to make intercession for Transgressors?* *to seek and to save them which are lost?* Oh! wilt thou save this Sinner, my sinful Soul? Lord, I fear I am none of thine; but wilt thou make me thine? I come to thy door, I lie at thy feet, a poor lost Soul, an undone Creature; Oh!

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wilt thou take me in, and make me one of thy Disciples? Wilt thou thus Come to Christ? even thou also art one of those, that he calls to; He came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance, M. 9. 13.

Thus much of Christ's entertaining *Nicodemus*.

Come we now to the first general point whereof Christ discourseth with *Nicodemus*; and that was the Doctrin of Regeneration in these words; *Verily, verily I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot enter the Kingdom of God.* In which we may note.

1. *The manner of propounding it.*

2. *The matter and substance of it.*

For the *manner*, it is propounded with a double Affelevation, *Verily, Verily I say unto thee.* In the Greek it is *Αμήν, Αμήν, Amen, Amen*, which in the Hebrew signifieth *Truth*. The Affelevation is doubled, to stir up attention in *Nicodemus*, who being yet in a great measure ignorant of the fundamental Principles of Religion, might haply have lightly esteemed this Doctrin of Regeneration, and therefore to stir up his attention Christ useth this double Affelevation, *Verily, Verily, I say unto thee.* Which was a form of Speech often used by our Saviour when he would solemnly avouch any weighty Truth. He never used it but in matters of great moment. By it therefore our Saviour giveth us to understand, *That the truth here delivered is a weighty truth, not lightly to be regarded, and slightly passed over.* For he who gave this Commandment, *Let your Communication be yea, yea, nay, nay*, would never have added this double Affelevation, if there had not been need thereof. Christ therefore having prefix'd this Preface to the following Truths, doth thereby stir us up to give, as the more credit, so the more diligent heed thereto. Yea, and thereby shews the Doctrin of Regeneration to be

be a most important Point, necessary to be known and learned of all.

The matter or substance of the Doctrine of Regeneration, as Christ hath laid it down, followeth in these words; *Except a man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God.*

For the more profitable handling whereof, I shall,

1. Clear the words by giving you the sense and meaning of them.

2. Raise and prosecute such Points of Doctrine as they afford unto us.

For the clearing of the Words. [*Except a Man.*]

In the Greek it is, *ἐὰν μὴ τις* Except any. This Indefinite Participle, joined with an exclusive, hath the force of a general. As if our Saviour had said, *No man can enter into Heaven except he be born again*; so as he speaketh not only of notorious Sinners, as Adulterers, Drunkards, Swearers, &c. but of all who are in their natural condition, tho' they live never so unblameably, free from scandalous sins, if they be not born again, their civil Righteousness will do them little good, for they shall never see the Kingdom of God.

Be born,] *Except a man be born.* This is spoken metaphorically and spiritually, in allusion to our natural Birth, which *Nicodemus* not observing, clean misconstrued Christ's words.

Now this word *born*, or *begotten*, is used to shew that the whole Nature of Man must be chang'd, and in a manner new franted, not in regard of the Substance, but of the Qualities of it. The natural Essence & Substance either of the Soul or Body is not destroyed, but still remaineth, only it is divested of the old, and invested with new Qualities. He that is regenerated hath a renewed Understanding, a renewed Will, renewed Affections, yea, new Desires, and a New Conversation. So that the meaning is,

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No man can enter into Heaven, unless by the Spirit of God he be first altered and changed from what he was, even brought out of the state of Nature into the state of Grace, and so become a new Creature, as in regard of his new manner of Creation, so in regard of his new manner of Conversation, leading another manner of life than he did before.

Born again.] The Original Word *γεννηθης* translated again, is as well attributed to place as to time, and signifieth above as well as again, as ver. 31. And indeed this is the most usual signification of the word and therefore some translate it so here, *Except a man be born from above*, as it is in our old Translation. And though our new Translators of the Bible have alter'd it, yet have they put in the Margin *from above*.

But questionless in this place the word signifieth again; for so Nicodemus taketh it, ver. 4. *How can a man be born when he is Old? Can he enter the second time into his Mother's Womb, and be born?* So that the word here hath respect to the time more than to the Place, and implieth the necessity of a second Birth, that a Man be *born of the Spirit*, as well as *born of the Flesh*, otherwise it had been better for him, he had never been born at all.

He cannot see the Kingdom of God.] Kingdom is here taken for that happy estate whereunto God bringeth his Elect in Christ; the entrance thereunto is in this life, which is commonly called *the Kingdom of Grace*; the full possession is in the life to come, called *the Kingdom of Glory*. These are not two distinct Kingdoms, but two degrees of one & the same Kingdom. Now whereas Christ saith, *He cannot see the Kingdom of God*, it's in effect as much as, *He cannot enter into the Kingdom of God*, as our Saviour clearly explaineth, ver. 5. *Except a man be born of water,*
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and of the spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God; that is, he cannot be saved.

Having thus cleared the words, by shewing you the sense and meaning of them, they afford unto us this Point of Doctrine:

Doct. Regeneration is necessary to Salvation: Or, to make a Man a Member of the invisible Church, and so an Heir of God's Kingdom. it is necessary that he be regenerate and born again, and thereby brought out of the state of Nature, into the State of Grace.

This very Doctrine, for substance, is again inculcated, ver. 5. *Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and the spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God.* Now our Saviour's twice repeating this Doctrine, both in ver. 3. and ver. 5. and in both places prefixing a double Asseveration, *Verily, Verily*, doth notably confirm the truth of it, and therefore there needs no farther proof thereof.

But for the better conceiving, and right applying this Doctrine, I shall shew you,

I. *The Nature of Regeneration, what it is.*

II. *The Parts of Regeneration.*

III. *The Causes which concur to the Work of Regeneration.*

IV. *The Reasons proving the necessity of Regeneration to Salvation.*

V. *The Uses of the Point.*

C H A P. III.

Of the Nature of Regeneration, what it is.

Regeneration is that Grace whereby a Natural Man is made a Spiritual or new Man; even he that by sin was a Child of the Devil, is made a Child of God. For as by virtue of our natural Birth, that which was no Man is made a Man, or Son of Man; so by this Spiritual Birth, he that was a natural

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tal Man is made a new Man, even a spiritual Man, a Child of God. So that to speak properly, *regeneration is another Birth after the former*; a spiritual Birth after our natural Birth, whereby a Man is as it were another Man: as it is said of *Caleb* that he was a man of another Spirit, so may it be said of a Regenerate Man, that he is of another Spirit, being quite altered and changed from what he was before.

Now this Regeneration, or new Birth, cannot be meant of a Birth after the flesh, for no natural or carnal thing is to be conceived in regeneration. But Regeneration is a spiritual Birth, a Birth of the Spirit, as is evident by those words, *That which is born of the Spirit is Spirit*, Joh. 3. So as by the Work of Regeneration, *Flesh is turned into Spirit*, that is, *the carnal corrupt disposition of man is changed and altered into a renewed and sanctified disposition*: whereby it appears that Regeneration is as it were a new Creation, and a regenerate Man is called *a new Creature*, being renewed throughout, both thorough his Soul with all the Powers and Faculties thereof, & thorough his Body, with all the Parts and Members thereof. So that the blind understanding is in some measure enlightened with the Knowledge of God, and the Knowledge of Jesus Christ; the stubborn and contumacious will in some measure be obedient and conformable to the Will of God; the feared and benumbed Conscience is now quickened and awakened; the hard Heart softened; the unruly Affections crucified; & the Body, with all the Parts and Members thereof, are made ready Instruments to put in execution the good Intentions of the Mind. Thus by Regeneration Men are wrought upon throughout, being wonderfully altered and changed from what they were before, in relation to which alteration they are said to be *born again*. Which may inform us of the wonder-
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ful depravation of our Nature, which was such, as mending and repairing would not serve the turn, but God must new make, and new create us; we must be born again, made new Creatures.

Which consideration should methinks take away all ground of boasting from any Man, and stir up every regenerate person to give unto God the Praise and the Glory of his happy Change, saying, *Not unto us, not unto us, but unto thy Name be the praise and glory of this great Work.*

Qu. Doth Regeneration admit any degrees?

Ans. Yes verily. For Regeneration may be considered in the beginning and progress of it, or in the consummation and perfection of it.

It is begun and increaseth in this life, it is consummate and perfect in the life to come.

In this life there is a Spirit mixed with Flesh, that is Grace with some corruption of Nature, as is evident by the Apostle's complaint in these words; *when I would do good, evil is present with me, for I delight in the Law of God after the inward man: but I see another Law in my members warring against the Law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the Law of sin, which is in my members, Rom. 7. 21, 22, 23.* So that sin & corruption doth remain in all the Regenerate as long as their Souls remain in their mortal Bodies; it remains, tho' it doth not reign in them; it is in this life cast down, but not cast out. *Habitat sed non regnat, manet, sed non dominatur: dejectum, sed non ejectum tamen, &c. Bernard. in Serm. 10. on Ps. 10.*

And this God in his great Wisdom is pleased to permit, to keep us humble and low in our selves, & to drive us unto Jesus Christ, and that as long as this flux of Blood runneth we should always be desirous to touch at least the Hem of his Garment.

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But at death that corruption will be utterly consumed, and Body and Soul clean freed from it; inſomuch as at the Reſurrection, when Body and Soul ſhall be again united, the Regeneration begun in this world will be manifeſted to be moſt perfect; whereas in this life the moſt Regenerate are imperfect, thro' the reliques of Sin, and remainder of corruption, which will abide in them ſo long as they abide and continue in this world.

Now ſeeing the work of Regeneration is imperfect in the very beſt here in this life, and that there remains fleſh and corruption in them ſo long as they remain in this world: do not thou look too high, I mean, after a great meaſure and degree of Grace than here is to be had. Many there are, who being regenerate by the Spirit of God, and ſo brought out of the ſtate of Nature into the ſtate of Grace, preſently look for a freedom from all Sin and Corruption, which becauſe they find working and ſtirring in them, thereupon queſtion the work of Regeneration and Truth of Grace in their Souls; but let ſuch know, that they look for more than here is to be found, or than God expects from them.

For God doth not expect or require of us here freedom from Sin and Corruption, but that we ſhould endeavour to ſubdue and mortifie it more and more, according to the meaſure of Grace and Strength which we have received from him. He doth not require of us that we be without Sin, but that Sin do not rule nor reign in our Mortal Bodies, according to that of the Apoſtle, *Rom. 6. 12. Let not ſin reign in your mortal bodies.* Neither doth the Lord require of us exact and perfect Righteouſneſs, which is impoſſible to our corrupt Nature: but only that we ſtrive and labour after, *tha.*

that we sincerely endeavour to serve him after the directions of this world; and that for our failings and imperfections, we do in an humble Confession bewail the same, and then beg the pardon and forgiveness of them, in and through the Merits of Jesus Christ; and this God will accept of, for he esteemeth more of our Affections than of our Actions, and accepteth the Will for the Deed, according to that of the Apostle, *2 Cor. 8. 12.* *If there be a willing mind, it is accepted, according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not.*

C H A P. IV.

Of the Parts of Regeneration, and Causes concurring thereunto.

HAVING shewed you what Regeneration is, and how it doth admit degrees, I shall shew you the Parts of Regeneration, which are two: 1. *Mortification.* 2. *Vivification.*

Mortification is implied under the Phrases of *casting off and crucifying the old man, and destroying the body of sin.* This is a Duty expressly enjoined in these words: *Mortifie your members which are upon the earth, Col. 3. 5.* By *Members on the earth*, he meaneth all sorts of Lusts and Sins whereunto a natural Man is given, as is evident by the particular instances which he himself reckoneth up in the words following, *as fornication, uncleanness, &c.*

These must be mortified, that is, put to death. It is not enough to curb and hold in sin, but the life of it must be let out. And indeed it is not possible to put on the *new Man*, till the *old Man* be cast off. Therefore there is necessity of Mortification first, before Vivification; for the bringing in of one Form presupposeth the putting out or destroying of the other; wherefore after Mortification followeth Vivification. 2. *Vivi-*

2. *Vivification* is the begetting of the Life of Grace in us, whence we live in Holiness and Righteousness. It is set forth in Scripture by *God's quickening us*, and by *our walking in newness of Life*, Eph. 2. 5.

Vivification then implieth a new spiritual life, which God by his Spirit worketh in us, which is clean contrary to our former, natural, corrupt course of life; for the effects of this life are Holiness and Righteousness, and all manner of good works.

Now it is absolutely necessary that this part of Regeneration, namely Vivification, be added to Mortification, which is the other part, even as necessary as that Christ being dead should be raised. Where had been the benefit of Christ's death, if he had not risen from the dead? And what can be imagined to be the profit of Mortification without Vivification? It is therefore the accustomed course of Sacred Scripture to infer the following of Holiness, upon the flying of sin; the doing of good, upon the eschewing of evil. *Now the things which God hath joined, let no man put asunder.*

Let us therefore prove our Regeneration, not only by ceasing from Sin, but following Holiness, and working Righteousness. Content not thy self to say, *I am not what I was*, unless thou canst also add, *I am what I was not*. It will be but little boot for thee to say, *I am no Drunkard, nor Swearer, nor Covetous, nor a walker after the flesh*: unless thou canst also say, *By the Grace of God I now walk after the Spirit, in faith, and love, and holy obedience, watchful unto, and endeavouring after, a fruitfulness in every good work*. Thou art not unjust, thou sayest; but dost thou shew mercy? Thou art no longer earthly; but art thou

heavenly-minded? Thou art no longer contentious, or quarelsom? but art thou a peace-maker? Thou hast no longer fellowship with the ungodly; but art thou a familiar of the Saints? Thou wilt not now curse, or swear, or lye, or scoff; but dost thou pray and bless? dost thou hear, and read, and meditate on God? dost thou study thine heart, and govern thy thoughts and affections? dost thou bridle thy tongue, set a watch over thine eyes, and ears, and steps? Is it thy care to please, and in all things to walk worthy of the Lord? Look to thy self, that thou be not deceived. Cast off the works of darkness, and put on the Armour of Light. Cast off the old man, and put on the new man, which as it is created after the Image, so will it carry thee on according to the will of God in Righteousness and true Holiness.

Having shewed the Nature of Regeneration, and the Parts thereof, I come now to shew what Causes concur to the work of Regeneration.

1. The efficient Cause, or primary Author, is God. For in this respect we are said to be born of God, *God hath begotten us*, Jam. 1. 18. *Even God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

2. The procuring Causes are God's will and God's mercy. There could be nothing out of God to move him, it must needs therefore arise from his own meer will: so saith the Apostle, *Jam. of his own will begat he us*, Jam. 1. 1. And there could be nothing in Man to move God hereunto; for Man by Nature is most miserable: it must needs therefore arise from God's meer mercy, for misery is the proper Object of mercy. On this ground it is justly said, that God, *1 Pet. 1. 3. According to his abundant mercy hath he begotten us again.*

3. The immediate worker of Regeneration is
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God's Spirit: In this respect we are said to be born of the Spirit, *Joh. 3. 4.* and Regeneration is stiled *the renewing of the Holy Ghost*, *Tit. 3. 5.* for it is a Divine Work above Humane Ability.

4. The secondary instrumental cause is God's Word. *Of his own will begat he us by the Word of Truth*, *Jam. 1. 18.* whereby is meant the Gospel. In this respect the Word is stiled *incorruptible Seed*, *1 Pet. 1. 23.* The Gospel is that part of God's Word which is most effectual hereunto, and is thereupon stiled *the Gospel of Salvation*, *Eph. 1. 13.* and *the Power of God unto Salvation*, *Rom. 1. 16.*

5. Ministers and Preachers of the Gospel are Ministerial causes of Regeneration, who are in relation to their Ministry, said to *beget us*, and stiled *Fathers*, *1 Cor. 3. 15.*

All these are comprised under the efficient Cause, and are so far from thwarting one another, as they sweetly concur to produce this Divine Work of Regeneration, being subordinate one to another, and may in this order be placed together: It being the Will of God to shew Mercy to Man, he ordained Ministers to cast the Seed of his Word into Mens Souls, which being quickened by the Spirit, Men are thereby born again.

II. The material Cause of Regeneration is the Parts whereof it doth consist, which are two:

1. Mortification. 2. Vivification. Of both which I have spoken in the foregoing Chapter.

III. The formal Cause of Regeneration is God's Image planted in us, which consists in Holiness and Righteousness. After this Image we are said to be renewed, *Eph. 4. 24.* This makes an essential difference betwixt a natural and a regenerate Man.

IV. The final Causes next and subordinate to

the Glory of God's free Grace and rich Mercy, are especially two :

1. *To make men able to do good*; namely, such good as may be acceptable and honourable to God, profitable to other Men, and truly advantageous to themselves. The Apostle therefore speaking of Regeneration, (which we have shewed to be a kind of Creation) thus expresth this end: *We are created in Christ Jesus unto good Works*, Eph. 2. 10.

2. *To make men fit for Glory*; for corrupt Flesh cannot partake of Celestial Glory. Whereupon, saith Christ, *Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God*: so far shall he be from being admitted into it, that he shall not come so near as to see it. God will not take a Sinner reeking in his Lusts, and presently invest him with a Crown of Glory. And therefore that we may be fitted for Heaven, the Lord is pleased by his Spirit to regenerate us, making us new Creatures, and thereby making us mete to be partakers of the Inheritance of the Saints in light.

Behold the riches of God's Mercy and Goodness, that he not only created us at first in a most happy Estate, after his own Image and Likeness, but when we wittingly and wilfully fell from the same, and plunged our selves in misery, wherein he might justly have left us, as he did the evil Angels: Yet he hath not only restored us again to that former Estate, by renewing his Image in us, but thereby fitted us for a more glorious and excellent Estate: wherein his Goodness appeareth to be, as his Greatness, infinite, incomprehensible. Who can sufficiently set it forth? *For as the Heaven is high above the Earth, so great is his Mercy towards them that fear him*, Psalm 103. 11.

C H A P. V.

Sheweth the Reasons why Regeneration is necessary to Salvation.

HAVING spoken of the Point by way of Explanation, I come now to speak of it by way of Confirmation. To this end, I shall shew you the Reasons of the Point, why Regeneration is necessary to Salvation.

Reas. 1. From the immutability of Gods purpose: God who hath chosen us to Life, hath chosen us also to Holiness, as our way to it. *We are bound to give thanks to God for you, brethren, beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation, through the sanctification of his Spirit,* 2 Thes. 2. 13. Whoever will pass into Glory, must take Grace in his way. You ask, Why may I not be saved, unless I be regenerated? Why! because God is resolved on the contray. *This is the will of God, your Sanctification first, and then your Salvation,* 1 Thes. 4. 3. Now the Purposes shall stand, *With him is no variableness, nor shadow of turning.* All the World shall sooner be damned, than the purpose of God shall be made void. The Lord God must cease to be the unchangable God, if thou ever be saved, who wilt not be sanctified.

Reas. 2. From the stability of Gods Word. God hath said, *Except a man be born again, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God.* Is the Word of God. Yea and Nay? Doth he say, and unsay? 'Heaven and Earth shall pass away, but his word shall not pass away, Mat. 24. 35. Count up, sinner, as sure as God is true, thou shalt never see the Salvation of God, unless thou be first made partaker of the renewing of the Holy Ghost.

Reas. 3. From the respect that Regeneration

bath to Salvation. Regeneration is a degree and part of Salvation. Grace is Glory begun, Holiness is the beginning of Blessedness, the Perfection whereof will be in Heaven hereafter, where the *Image of God, which consisteth in knowledge, holiness and righteousness*, will be perfect in our Souls, where we shall perfectly love God, and delight in him, and be ever praising him with the Heavenly Host. Now, how canst thou expect the participation and enjoyment of this blessed Estate, without Regeneration and Renovation here? unless the Image of God be renewed upon thee in Holiness, and thou dost truly love God, and delight in Communion with him here? Canst thou expect the consummation without a beginning? to be perfectly holy hereafter, and not initially holy here? to live with God in Glory hereafter, and yet here live and lie in thy filthiness and uncleanness? Canst thou expect hereafter to live in the everlasting love of God, and yet here have no true love to him at all? Canst thou expect hereafter fulness of delight in the presence of God, and yet here have no delight in him at all, but takest thy whole delight either in satisfying thy covetous humour, by heaping up Riches, or in gratifying thy sinful Lusts and Affections, by yielding to the solicitations of the Flesh?

Be not deceived, as I said before, so I must say it again, Grace is a necessary beginning of Glory. As Sin is Death begun, and Hell begun, so is Grace the first fruits of Life and Glory: And as certain as it is, that he shall never find an Hell hereafter who is purged from his sins here, so undoubtedly certain is it, that he shall never come into the Divine Presence hereafter, who is not here made partaker of the Divine Nature; he shall never enter

ter into the *Kingdom of Glory*, who is not first born into the *Kingdom of Grace*. Be a Convert in this World, or thou wilt be a Reprobate in the other World. Thou mayest as well expect a Birth where there hath been nothing formed in the Womb, a Noontide where there hath been no dawning, as ever look to see the day-light of Glory, who hast never known the morning of Grace.

Reas. 4. From that Corruption of Man's Nature in which he is brought into the World. For our first Parents having by their fall defaced that Image of God in which they were at first created, and being thereupon corrupted and polluted in every power of their Souls, and part of their Body, all that come from them are in like manner corrupted and polluted, an unclean Off-spring from unclean Progenitors. *For who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean! not one,* as Job speaketh, Job 14. 4. And saith our Saviour, *That which is born of the flesh is flesh*, Joh. 3. 6. that is, Every one that is born of Man, every Mothers Child is carnal and corrupt; every Man by his first Birth is polluted and unclean: *Now no unclean person can enter into God's kingdom*, Rev. 21. 27. Believe it, Sinner, God will never take thee from the Dunghil reeking in thy Lusts, and set thee down by him in the Throne. The Holy Land was never designed to be peopled with Dogs and Swine. *Without shall be dogs*, Rev. 22. *Corruption shall not inherit incorruption*, nor shall flesh and blood inherit the Kingdom of God. Bastards may not inherit: Thou must first be a Child, and have the Spirit of a Child in thee, and then thou art Heir, an Heir with God, and a Joynt-Heir with Christ.

Reas. 5. From the Holiness of God's Nature, which is such, that no unclean person can stand

in his presence. There is a contrariety between the holy Nature of God, and the unholy Nature of carnal and unregenerate Men : and therefore what Communion can there be between them ? Between an holy God, and unholy Creatures ? Between an holy God, and impure Creatures ? Surely none at all. So much the Apostle expresseth, 2 Cor. 6. 14. where he saith, *What fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness ? or the righteous God with unrighteous Men ? What Communion hath Light with Darknes ? Which Interrogation implieth a strong Negation.* Believe it, Sinners, if ever you look to enjoy Communion with God in Glory, you must have Union with him in Grace ; you must here be regenerate, and become new Creatures ; yea, holy as he is holy, that you may be such as he may dwell withal, and delight in. For as the Apostle speaketh, Heb. 12. 14. *Without Holiness no Man shall see the Lord:* He shall be so far from enjoying the presence of God, that he shall not so much as see him.

C H A P. VI.

An Use of Exhortation to endeavour after Regeneration, with quickning motives thereunto.

HAVING thus done with the Explication and Confirmation of the Point, come we now to the Use and Application thereof.

I. The first may be an Use of Exhortation, both to the Unregenerate and to the Regenerate.

First, to the Unregenerate : Is Regeneration absolutely necessary to Salvation ? Oh then, how doth it concern you, who are yet in your Sins, and under the power of corrupt Nature, earnestly to desire, & industriously to labour after this saving Change, in the use of all means God hath sanctified

fied thereunto! Let your outward condition be what it will, never so rich, never so honourable, yet far be it from you to sit down satisfied in any condition, till you be renewed and sanctified by the Spirit of God. Alas! how many be there in the World, who tho' in their natural and carnal estate, yet live as securely and merrily, as if their condition were as safe and good as the best! Ask them one by one, Whether the work of Regeneration be wrought in their Souls? and some will answer, they hope it is; others, that they never doubted it; tho' none of them know what Regeneration is, nor ever minded any such thing: And yet these Men have not only read, but do likewise believe the words of our Saviour, who hath told them, *That except they be born again, they cannot enter into the kingdom of Heaven, Joh. 3. 3.*

Ah sinner! I beseech thee, for the sake of thy precious and immortal Soul, to stir up in thy self an hearty desire and sincere endeavour after this blessed Work. As it is the one thing necessary to Salvation, so let it be the main thing of thy desire and endeavour. There is nothing deserves precedency in thy thoughts, aims, and labours, before this. *David resolved not to give sleep to his eyes, nor slumber to his eye-lids, till he found an habitation for the Lord, Psal. 132. 4.* The habitation which pleaseth God most, is thine Heart, but it must be a renewed Heart. Oh! how darest thou sleep a night in that house where God doth not dwell! and he dwells not in thee, unless thou be regenerated by his holy Spirit. In the fear of God therefore see thou give no rest to thy Soul, no ease to thy Mind, till thou find a blessed change wrought in thee, till thou findest thou art brought out of the state of Nature into the state of Grace.

down satisfied in the enjoyment of any worldly comfort, without the enjoyment of this mercy. And indeed, how canst thou live merrily, or sleep quietly, so long as thou livest in thine unregenerate estate? in which if thou shouldest die, thou wouldest perish for ever, even to all Eternity; especially considering the uncertainty of thy life, whether thou shalt live a day, or an hour longer.

For the more profitable handling this Use, I shall,

1. Give you some Motives to quicken up your desires and endeavours after the work of Regeneration.

2. Shew you the means to be performed for the better attaining thereunto.

The Motives may be drawn to these 3. Heads:

1. The Excellency. 2. The Utility. 3. The Necessity of Regeneration.

1. For the first; the Excellency thereof will appear from these four Particulars:

1. Regeneration doth enable a Man, raise him up towards his Original Perfection. Man was made the noblest of all Creatures in this visible World, in the Image and likeness of God. Sin defaced the Image of God, and stamped the Image of the Devil upon him. A Sinner is a Man degenerated into a Beast; *Man being in honour, abideth not: but is like the Beasts that perish*, Plal. 49.

12. He lives like a Beast, and dies like a Beast, not knowing whither he goeth. *Every man is brutish in his knowledge*, Jer. 10.

14. He hath a brutish Heart, lives a brutish Life. By Grace a Man comes to himself, is raised up from a Beast to a Man again, renewed after the Image of God; the Spirit of Glory and of God shines forth in him. There's more of the Glory of God seen in a Saint, than in all the

Works

Works of God under the Sun ; nay, than in the glorious Sun in the Heavens. The Sun, Moon, and Stars, fall short of the Glory of the new Creature. *In illis tantum sunt opera Dei, in hac est Imago Dei*, Aug.

2. The Excellency of Regeneration appears, in that it makes a Man a true Christian. A Man is not really a Christian because he hath been baptized, beareth the Name, and frequenteth the Ordinances of Christ, but because he is regenerated by the Spirit of Christ, and thereby translated out of a state of Sin and Death, into a state of Life and Peace. For as under the Law he was not a Jew who was one outwardly, being circumcised in the flesh : but he was a Jew who was one inwardly, being circumcised in his Heart and Spirit ; in like manner he is no true Christian, who is only outwardly baptized, but he who is inwardly baptized by the Spirit, and whose heart is changed and renewed.

3. The Excellency of this new Birth appears in this, that it is the beginning of eternal Life and Happiness: even of the same Life which we shall live hereafter in Heaven, with the Saints and glorious Angels, to all eternity. Grace here is not only an evidence of Glory hereafter, but it is the beginning of that Glory which hereafter we shall more fully enjoy in Heaven. Grace and Glory differ only in degree : for Grace is Glory begun here, and Glory is Grace consummated and perfected hereafter. Now considering that this is such an excellent state, how doth it concern you, as earnestly to desire, so industriously to endeavour after it, in the use of all means God hath sanctified.

II. Another Motive may be taken from the *Utility of Regeneration*. If it be demanded, What is the

the profit thereof? We may answer as the Apostle did of Circumcision, *Much every way*: for this is that Godliness which is profitable unto all things, having promises of the life that now is, and of that which is to come; that is, it hath Heaven and Earth intailed on it, and therefore must needs be profitable. The Regenerate therefore are called *Heirs of the Promises*, Heb. 6. 17. Such only have the true Riches, being *rich in Faith*, as the Apostle James calleth them, Ja. 2. 5. As *Laodicea* was poor, tho' abounding in outward fulness; so these are truly rich, tho' destitute of many outward things, having an interest in God, who is the Fountain of all Blessings. How should the consideration here, of stir you up, as earnestly to thirst, so sincerely to endeavour after this blessed State!

III. Another Motive may be taken from *the Necessity of Regeneration*; it is absolutely necessary to Salvation. It had been better for thee never to have been born, than not to be born again; it is as necessary as Heaven and Happiness: For, saith our Saviour himself, *Except a man be born again, he cannot see, much less enter into the kingdom of Heaven*. So that there is no hope of the Salvation of any unregenerate Man or Woman: but if they live and die in that estate, their portion will be Death and Damnation with the Devils and Damned to all eternity, and in regard of the uncertainty of their Lives, they are not sure to be out of Hell one day longer.

Ah Sinner! what dost thou mean then to continue in thy carnal and unregenerate Estate? As sure as the Word of God is true, if thou die therein, thou art shut out of all hope of Mercy for ever, and shalt pass into easeless and endless Misery. In the fear of God therefore, when thou risest up in
the

the morning, consider with thy self that thou art uncertain of being out of Hell till the evening: and when thou liest down, consider how uncertain thou art of being out of Hell till the next morning. Surely this consideration is enough to to amaze any poor Christian, who is indeed regenerate, but maketh some question thereof in himself. How much more should it amaze and startle thee, who art yet in thy carnal and sinful estate, and stir thee up without any farther delay to escape for thy life, and make out in haste after thy Redemption from this dreadful condition.

I would ask thee this Question, Whether, if thou shouldest put off thy seeking after the great Work of Regeneration and Conversion till another Year, Week, or Day, thou art sure to be then on this side the Grave, or on this side Hell? Certain it is, thou hast no assurance of thy life for one day longer: Nay, I dare boldly say, thou thy self knowest and believest as much. Ah Sinner! *What folly, yea, what madness is it then, for thee wilfully to live one day longer in such an estate? In which if thou shouldest die, thou art without hope of recovery, undone for ever!*

Obj. Haply thou wilt say, Tho' I am not sure to live another day, yet I am likely being in good Health and Strength of Body.

Ans. How many as strong and healthful as thy self, have suddenly by Death been snatch'd away? And why mayest not thou as soon be taken away, having no Lease of thy Life? Who then but a Fool or a Madman would adventure his carnal happiness upon such an hazard? O therefore, as thou tenderest the everlasting good of thy precious Soul, put not off this great and weighty work a day longer: *for who knoweth what a day may bring forth?* Prov. 27. 1.

Had!

Hadst thou been taken away in a state thou art in, how sad had thy case been? Where hadst thou been at this hour? Certainly thou art not able to conceive the dreadfulnes of that misery thou shouldst now have been in. And hast thou lived all this while in so great danger, and wilt thou live in it still? God forbid! Hath a Miracle of Mercy kept thee out of Hell so long, & wilt thou yet continue securly in such danger of it. Oh ungrateful Wretch! Questionless if thou hadst any ingenuity in thee, thou wouldst be ashamed thus to abuse the patience and long-suffering of God towards thee, which should have led thee to Repentance, Thou shouldst rather take up a resolution and say, Though I have hitherto abused the patience and long-suffering of God, I will abuse it no more; Though I have often slighted and rejected the gracious invitations of Jesus Christ, yet through the Grace of God I will reject them no more, but close with them, and give up my self unto Christ, from henceforth to be ruled and governed by him.

God hath allotted to every man who lives in the bosom of the Church a certain day of Grace, and time of Repentance; which whosoever neglects, can never be saved. Ah Sinner as therefore thou wouldst not neglect thine own Salvation; neglect not thy day of Grace, neither let slip the season of Mercy; but as the Apostle exhorteth, Heb. 3. 15. *To day if you will hear his voice, harden not your hearts. Behold! now is the accepted time, now is the Day of Salvation; If that be once past, there is no recovering of it.*

C H A P. VII.

Sheweth the miserable and dreadful condition of the unregenerate in their life-time.

HAVING given you some motives to quicken up your desires and endeavours after the Work of Regene-

Regeneration, I come now to shew you, *the means on your part to be performed for the better attaining thereunto*; which may be brought to the two general Heads;

1. *The Embracing some Truths.*

2. *The Practising some Duties.*

The Truths to be embraced are these:

1. *That every man in his state of unregeneracy is in a miserable state, and dreadful condition.*

2. *That there is hope of Mercy for the greatest Sinners.*

That you may the better understand the miserable Condition of Men in their state of Unregeneracy, I shall shew you their Miseries:

1. *In this Life.*

2. *At Death.*

3. *After Death.*

Their miseries in this Life are briefly these:

1. *They are servants to sin, and slaves to their lusts,* making it their main work & design to serve their sinful flesh, with its affections. The baseness of this slavery under sin will appear the more if we shall consider.

1. *What it is we do in thrall thereby, even our precious Souls,* which at first were created after the image of God, and fitted for his noble service, and communion with himself. Now for this immortal Being to be a drudge to base Pleasures and Profits, to the vain and vile things of this World, is a most sad degeneration.

2. *What are the fruits of this Spiritual Bondage and Slavery.*

1. *At the best a little seeming pleasure or profit,* that lasts but for a moment, which the Apostle calls *The pleasures of Sin for a Season*, Heb. 11. 26, they are but of little worth, & but of short continuance. And sure it must needs be a point of folly, eagerly to pursue

sue these sinful Lusts and Pleasures, which are but light & temporary, which do but appear & vanish, to the hazard of those durable Riches and eternal Pleasures, which are at God's right hand.

2. Another fruit which usually follows upon our slavish subjection to our Lusts, is Death eternal, according to that of the Apostle, *Rom. 6. 23. The wages of sin is death*, & that eternal, as appeareth by the opposition of eternal Life: for, saith the Apostle, *The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life*. So that as eternal Life followeth an holy Life, so eternal Death followeth a sinful Life. This is the reward, Sinner, that thy God whom thou servest will pay thee at last, *Thou must die the death*.

Oh the folly and madness of this sensual enslaved World! Sure were there nothing in Sin but the present slavery, it were enough to dissuade any ingenious spirit. Who would be a slave? a slave to Lust? at the command of every unclean motion? at the beck of every brutish affection? But if the vileness of the work will not deter thee, will not the dreadful-ness of the Wages neither? which is eternal Death and Condemnation. O consider this, you who make so light a matter of Sin, and take such pleasure in obeying the Lusts thereof!

II. All men in the state of Unregeneracy are servants and slaves to the Devil; which necessarily followeth upon the former; for such as are in subjection to their Lusts must needs be under the bondage and slavery of Satan, in that the chief power he hath over us, is by Lust to allure us unto sin. I know all men are apt to say, *That they hate & despise the Devil, & abhor to be his slave or servant*, but yet in the meantime they obey his sinful Commands, and thereby declare themselves to be his Servants; for, as the Apost. speaketh, *Rom. 6. 16. Know ye not, that*

that to whom ye yield your selves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey? And, saith the beloved Disciple, 1 Joh. 3. 8. *He that committeth Sin is of the Devil; that is, who gives up himself to the committing of sin, is a servant and slave to the Devil, for he doth his drudgery.*

Oh that the eyes of poor sinners were open'd to see who it is that puts them upon all manner of sin and wickedness! certainly they would not then be so ready and forward thereunto. Oh that they did but know in what a miserable bondage and slavery they are! certainly then they would not be so merry & jovial; neither would they sleep one night quietly in such a state & condition, but they would be casting about how they might be freed and delivered from the same.

III. *All men in their state of Unregeneracy are under the Curse of God, which continually so hangeth over their heads, that they are cursed in every thing.*

1. *In their estate.* Wealth & Riches are in themselves good things even the good Blessings of God; but yet all the Wealth of carnal and unregenerate Men are accursed unto them; their very Blessings are turned into Curses, as the Lord threatneth by his Prophet Mal. saying, *I will Curse their Blessings.*

Cursed they are, and shall be, in the City, and in the Field, in their Basket, and in their Store, in the increase of their Kine, and the flocks of their sheep, as you have it expressed, Deut. 28. 17, 18. Thou enjoyest abundance of this Worlds Goods, yet so long as thou livest in thy wicked and ungodly courses, be it of lying, swearing, cozening, whoring, drinking, &c the Curse of God is in thy store and abundance, which makes way for thine eternal misery.

2. *In their Names.* Their very Name is cursed; for as the wise man speaketh, Prov. 10. 7. *The me-*

mory of the Just is blessed, but the name of the wicked shall rot; that is, the just and righteous shall leave a sweet scent behind them; so that they shall not be mentioned without some commendation; But the wicked shall leave a stinking savour behind them, so that their very Names shall be loathsome & abominable; like a rotten Carcass they shall for a while stink above Ground, & at last be utterly forgotten.

3. *In their Houses.* For, as the Wise man speaketh Pr. 3 33. *The Curse of the Lord is in the house of the wicked.* Tho' their houses be never so well furnish'd; yet what comfort and content can there be found therein, when the Curse of God is in them? which is enough to blast the Beauty, and eat up the Timber and the Stones thereof, Zech. 5. 4.

4. *In their religious exercises.* The Word which they hear is cursed unto them; that which to others is the savour of life unto life, to them is the savour of Death unto Death, being a means to ripen their sins, & hasten their ruin. *The Prayers which they make are accursed unto them,* oftentimes bringing down a Curse rather than a Blessing. Yea *the Table of the Lord is likewise accursed unto them,* so that instead of feeding on the Body and Blood of Christ, they eat & drink their own *Damnation*. O how sad and lame is that table must thy condition needs be, when those things which are not only Blessings in themselves but likewise blessed unto others, should be cursed unto thee, and heighten both thy sin and sorrow! And if thy blessings become Curses, Oh what will thy Curses be!

IV. As the ground and foundation of the Curse, *All men in their state of Unregeneracy are under the guilt of all their sins,* which must needs make their condition sad & dreadful. For as the *man is blessed whose iniquity is forgiven, & whose sin is covered,* Ps.

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32.1. so is he most wretched and miserable, who lieth under the guilt of sin without pardon, *his Conscience being oftentimes tormented with such restless horrors, & perplexities,* that tho' Life be most sweet, & Hell most dreadful, yet it makes a man wilfully to cast away the one, & willingly to embrace the other, that he may be freed from the horror of his guilty Conscience. Thus Judas sought ease by an Halter, & prefer'd hanging, yea, the torments of Hell, before the anguish of his guilty Conscience. Now thou mayest make light of unpardoned sin, thinking it no great matter, but the day is coming when thou wouldst give all th' world (if thou hadst it) for a pardon, which then cannot be had. Therefore, as ever thou wouldst stand before Christs Judgment-seat with comfort, and not be cast into everlasting burnings, now turn from thy sins, & be earnest with God in Prayer, for the pardon of them in and through the Merits of Christs bloody Death & Passion. Art thou a sinner, & not a pardon'd sinner? O tremble! What conscience hast thou, that can let thee sleep, & sing, and laugh, in such a dismal state!

V. Every Man in his state of unregeneracy is liable to all sorts of Judgments.

I. To temporal Judgments, as Pain, Sickneses and Diseases, Losses, Crosses, and the like. Haply for the present thou mayst be without them, but thou canst not promise thy self freedom and exemption from the same, no not for one day; for they are continually hanging over thy head, ready every moment to seize upon thee, and they oftentimes come suddenly when they are least expected. It is expressly noted that when the Lord rained Fire and Brimstone upon Sodom and Gomorrah, at that time the Sun was risen from the Earth. Little did the Sodomites expect so strange a shour after so fair a morning

morning. Believe it, this days ease, and rest, and mirth, maybe turned into pangs and anguish, and groanings, and roarings before to morrow.

2. They are liable to spiritual Judgments, as blindness of mind, hardness of heart, vileness of affections, horror of conscience, and the like. The Prophet *Isaiah* doth elegantly decipher the miserable condition of an Unregenerate Man in this respect : *The wicked, saith he, are like the troubled Sea when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire & dirt, Isa. 57. 20.* The Sea is not only oft-times outwardly tossed up and down with Winds and Tempests, but also inwardly disquieted, even with her own motions, casting up continually Mire and Dirt : even so the heart of a carnal man is not only many times outwardly troubled with crosses and afflictions, but also inwardly disquieted with the impetuous violence of filthy Lusts, and the restless terrors and torments of a guilty Conscience, which are far sorer than any outward Afflictions, as seizing upon the tenderest part, namely the Soul, and Spirit of a Man.

3. They are liable to eternal Judgments. What can they expect, if they die in their state of Unregeneracy, but after this momentary life is ended to be cast into that everlasting fire which God hath prepared for them, as well as for the Devil and his Angels ? which is the most dreadful condition of all ; That Judgment cannot be accounted small which is eternal. An eternal Fever, or but an eternal Tooth-ach, were a misery unspeakable ; *But what are these to the lying in that lake which burneth with fire and brimstone to all eternity ?* Oh ! methinks the name of eternal Judgment should, if not fright him out of his Wits, yet awaken every unregenerate man out of his security, and stir

stir him up without any farther delay to abandon his wicked and ungodly course of life, and to set upon the practise of all holy and religious Duties, and to labour therein, to get the Work of Regeneration wrought in his heart, that he become a new creature. It may be thou hast a plentiful Portion of this Worlds Goods, enjoying what thine heart can wish or desire; but, Oh! what will it profit thee to live plentifully and prosperously here, and to be eternally miserable hereafter? Thy former happiness will serve only to make thee more sensible of future miseries; And therefore when thou art tempted to any unlawful Pleasure or Profit, reason thus with thy self; *Shall I for a short momentary pleasure, that will soon have an end, run the hazard of an eternal Judgment, that will never have an end? Shall I for a little profit here, lose my Soul to all eternity? what greater folly, yea, what greater madness, can be imagined?*

Thus much of the Miseries of the Unregenerate in this Life; Come we now to shew their Miseries at Death.

C H A P. VIII.

Sheweth the miserable and dreadful Condition of the Unregenerate at their Death.

IF the Life of an unregenerate Man be so miserable, as hath been shewed: how doleful, think you, will be his death? Surely his Misery then will be much increased, as will appear from the consideration of these Particulars;

I. When Death shall appear unto thee, and tell thee it hath a Message from the Lord, who hath sent an *Habeas Corpus* for thy Body; then comes in Conscience, if a little awakened, with her Books of Accompts, her black and bitter Roll, and shews thee

thee thy old reckonings and Arrears, setting before thee the follies of thy Youth, the sins of thy riper Years, and the Iniquities of thy whole Life.

Ah Sinner! thou who go'st on impenitently in thy wicked and ungodly course of life, consider with what a ghastly countenance thou wilt look upon that black and hellish Catalogue of all thy sins! thy Lyes and Oaths, thy railing and rotten Speeches, thy Scoffing at Gods People, thy Goods ill gotten, thy time ill spent, thy profanation of Sabbaths, thy speculative Wantonness, yea, the many actual Filthyneesses and uncleannesses, thy Pride, Worldliness and Covetousness, thy sensual Revelings and jovial Meetings. What horror will then possess thy Soul, no heart of Man can conceive, nor tongue of Man and Angels can express.

II. The Devil will not then be wanting to aggravate thy sins, and to set before thee the Curses and the Judgments due unto thee for the same, thereby to drive thee to despair: for when *Death* layeth siege to the *Body*, then doth *He* most violently assault the *Soul*; and the shorter he perceiveth his time to be, the more eagerly doth he bestir himself.

III. Death puts an end to all thy worldly Comforts and Contentments, which must all die with thee, as to thy use & comfort; It salutes thee with this sad word, *Thou hast received thy good things*, now an end of thy Heaven and Joy. Particularly,

1. Then thou must part with all thy carnal Pleasures & Delights, which thou hast loved so dearly; yea, then thou wilt find little comfort remaining of all thy former Pleasures, wherein thou tookest so much content and delight; and for the enjoyment whereof, thou dispensedst not only with the Duties of thy calling; but likewise with the Duties of Piety. Yea, it will be a very hell unto thee upon earth, to

consider,

consider, what eternal Torments thou art like to endure, for those poor & perishing Pleasures which thou enjoyest here for a Season. Are these the things for which I die? Are these the price of my Soul, of my Blood, of my Peace?

2. Thou must part with thy Wealth and Riches, carrying nothing away with thee of all thy enjoyments: yea, it will be a death to thee to part with thy wealth, which was thy life, but to consider how thou hast damned thy Soul for the getting thereof, this will be an hell to thee.

3. Thou must part with all the means and opportunities of Grace. Now thou enjoyest the Ordinances of Christ, as the Word, Prayer, & Sacraments, which whilst thou rejoicedst thou hadst hope, but Death puts an end to these, and thy hopes must give up their Ghost. Now Christ calls upon thee, Sabbath after Sabbath, by his Ministers & Ambassadors, wooing and beseeching thee to abandon thy lusts, to cast away thy sins, and to cast thy self into his Arms, to accept of the reconciliation purchased by his Blood. But e'er long thou shalt hear no more of these things, not a Sabbath more, not a Sermon more, not one word more of Grace, of Mercy, of Hope, for ever. When thou wouldst give, if thou hadst them, ten thousand Worlds for one moment of that merciful time of Grace, which thou hast so long abused, for a drop of that precious blood which thou hast so long trampled under thy feet; yea, for one Sabbath more, to have Christ once more tendered to thee in the Ministry of the Gospel; but alas it will not be granted.

Ah Sinner! then wilt thou cry out of thy Sins, and cry for mercy, Mercy, Mercy, Lord, to a dying Soul, that am just sinking, perishing under the Load of mine Iniquities. Then wilt thou begin to
wilt

wish when it is too late, that thou hadst spent thy precious Time to better purpose, that thou hadst minded more the things for eternity: that thou hadst closed with the tenders and offers of Jesus Christ and that thou hadst better improved the means and opportunities of Grace, which thou didst once enjoy. Thou then wilt say, *Oh if the Lord would be pleased to add a few Years more to my life! How would I condemn the World, and the Vanities thereof? How exactly would I order my Conversation? How careful would I be of Duty? How watchful against Sin? How would I bestir my self to work out mine own Salvation?* But the Time of thy departure is at hand, and there is no hope of a Reprieve for one day longer; and therefore all these good wishes and purposes come too late.

There are two things especially which will aggravate a Sinner's Misery at his death.

1. To think what possibility of making his peace with God, he hath had all his life time; to remember how often he hath been invited to accept of Jesus Christ, and yet would not.

2. To think that now there is no hope of mercy having by his Sins shut Heaven Gate, and hardened God's heart against him. Surely then wilt thou in the bitterness of thy Soul, cry out, and say, *The God of mercy hath utterly forsaken me; and the Devil who knows no mercy, waits for to take me.* Ah! then which way soever thou look'st, thou wilt find nothing but matter of bitter weeping and lamentation. If thou look backward, what canst thou behold, but all the filthy and abominable Lusts of thy youth unrepented of? yea, multitudes of horrid sins which thou hast committed in the whole course of life; for which thou never hast been humbled, nor shed one penitential Tear; the guilt

guilt of the least of them is enough to sink the Body and Soul into everlasting burnings.

If thou look forward, what canst thou behold but suddain destruction ready to seize upon thee? Yea, God's strict Tribunal, before which thou art just making thy appearance, there immediately to be sentenced to endless Torments and miseries of the other World; the Sting and Terrors of which thou shalt never be able either to avoid, or abide.

If thou look within thee, what canst thou behold but thy Conscience polluted and defiled: yea, accusing and condemning thee? If without thee, what canst thou behold, but the wicked World which thou hast too much loved: and thy relations which stand weeping about thee: a company of miserable comforters, that cannot delay the separating stroke of death one day or hour: neither can they afford the least dram of true comfort.

If thou look downward, what canst thou behold, but Hell deserved; with her Mouth open ready to swallow thee up quick? and the Devils ready to receive thy Soul & carry it to that dungeon of darkness. If upward, what canst thou behold, but a provok'd enraged God? whom because thou refusedst to hear in the day of his merciful visitation, he will now laugh at thy Calamity & mock when thy fear cometh upon thee as himself threateneth, *Prov. 1. 24, 26* and in *v. 28*. *saith the Lord, I knew shalt thou call upon me, but I will not answer, thou shalt seek me, but thou shalt not find me, for that thou hast refused knowledge, and didst not conse the fear of the Lord.* And *v. 30.* *Thou wouldst none of my Counsell, but despisedst all my reproofs. Therefore shalt thou eat the Fruit of thine own way, and be filled with thine own desires:* that is, the wickedness which thou hast sown, shalt thou reap with all judgments. Thus thou wilt look every

every where for help, yet findest thy self every way helpless and hopeless.

Haply thou wilt then look unto Jesus Christ, in hope that he will appear for thee, and his Blood make thy Atonement. But sinner know, that tho' his Blood be a Fountain opened to all poor penitent believers to wash away the filthy spots and stains of their sins; yet to thee who hast all thy life long suffered Christ to stand knocking at the door of thine heart, by the Ministry of his Word, by the Motions of his Spirit, and by the checks of thine own Conscience, and wouldst not open unto him; to thee his Blood will be then a Fountain seal'd, so that thou shalt not partake of the least benefit thereof, because in thy life time thou hast so often slighted it, yea, and crucifi'd him afresh by thy bloody sins.

Ah Sinner, whither wilt thou flee for comfort in the midst of thy distress? It will then be too late to cry out, Oh that the time I have spent in Taverns and Ale-houses, in sports and pastimes, in carnal pleasures and sensual delights, I had spent in prayer and fasting, in humbling and repenting! It will then be too late to cry with *Balaam*, *Oh that I might die the Death of the righteous*, when thou hast neglected to live the life of the righteous. For look as the life is, so commonly is the death; & as death leaves a Man, so the last judgment shall find him.

And now Sinner, thy last sand being run out, thy day past, and the Devils long looked for day being come, who waits for thy Soul, so soon as it goeth out of thy Body: Oh what a direful Screech will thy Soul give when it passeth out of thy body, into the Devils clutches to be carried by him into the bottomless burning Lake!

Oh

Oh how should the consideration of these unspeakable Miseries which are the Portion of natural and unregenerate Men at their deaths, startle and awaken all such Worldlings and Sensualists who so they may encrease their wealth & satiate themselves with worldly pleasures and delights take no thought now, nor make any provision against this dreadful day of reckoning. I mean, the day of their deaths! Surely did they know, and feelingly apprehend, or would they be brought to believe what horror and astonishment, what terror and anguish is like then to seize upon them; they would count it the greatest point of Wisdom in the World speedily to labour for an Interest in Jesus Christ, who alone can free them as from the sting of death, so from these Horrors & Astonishments which accompany the same, and would now ply as the blessed Means of Salvation; as reading, hearing, praying, fasting, &c. which are now their Burthen & Bondage, yea, the matter of their mocks & scorns would then be their daily delight & exercise.

C H A P. IX.

Sheweth the miserable and dreadful Condition of the Unregenerate after their deaths.

IF this were the Conclusion of Unregenerate Men that death did put an end to all their miseries, happy were it for many. But this is their grief & sorrow, their woe and misery, that all this is the beginning of their sorrows: that after all this, there is a reckoning to be made for what is past. For as it is appointed to all Men to dye, so after this cometh the Judgment, Heb. 9. 23. Whereby the Judgment that immediately followeth after death, the Apostle meaneth the particular Judgment, which is at the end of mans life, as is evident by this phrase

after this, which intendeth the time of a Mans death. For as there is a general Judgment at the end of the World: So there is a particular Judgment that passeth upon each Man at the end of this life. So soon as thy breath departeth out of thy Body, it fareth with thy Soul, as with that Man of whom the Prophet *Amos* speaketh, *Amos 5. 19. Who did flee from a Lyon, and a Bear met him.* In like manner thy Soul is no sooner escaped out of a miserable World, but in a moment it is plunged into another, and greater misery.

Herein lieth a main difference between the Children of God, and the wicked. The course which God taketh with his Children, is this, when thy Soul is set at liberty from the Prison of the Body, it is instantly conveyed by the Angels into *Abrahams Bosom*, as is expressly noted of *Lazarus*: *And being clothed with a long white Robe of Christs Righteousness is joyned to the Spirits of just Men made perfect.*

But with the Souls of wicked and impenitent Sinners, it is far otherwise; for so soon as they depart out of their Bodies, they are seized upon by wicked Angels, and presently brought before Gods Tribunal seat, where receiving their doom, they are instantly sent down into the Kingdom of darkness, and bottom of the burning Lake, there to be reserved in everlasting Chains unto the great Day of Judgment.

II. Besides this particular Judgment on the Souls of the Unregenerate at their deaths, there will be a general Judgment on their Souls and Bodies reunited at the great and last Day.

For the fuller clearing & opening of this great & fundamental Principle of Religion, I will shew you,

1. That there will be a Day of Judgment.
2. The Person who shall be the Judge.

I. For

I. For the first, that there will be a Day of Judgment, is clear from that of the Author to the *Hebrews*, Ch. 9. 2. where he reckoneth it amongst the fundamental Principles of Religion. And *Act. 17. 31.* The Apostle Paul speaking of God, saith, *He hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness.* Yea, in *2 Cor. 5. 10.* he puts a *Must* upon it, *We must*, saith he, *all appear before the Judgment seat of Christ*, which implieth the necessity thereof.

And truly, there is a necessity of a general Judgment, as for the Declaration of the Equity of Gods particular Judgment on each Man at his death; in which respect it is called, *The Day of the Revelation of the righteous Judgment of God*, Rom. 2. 8. So for a clear Manifestation of the Justice of God. Tho' God be most just in all his ways, yet in this World it is not so evidently discerned. Because God in wisdom oft suffereth the wicked to prosper: yea, and to domineer over the Righteous. Here the *best Men* are oft-times the *worst used*, & *most wronged*. Here the *true Prophets* of God are fed with Bread and Water in their Caves; whilst the *false Prophets* of *Baal* fared plentifully at *Jezebel's* Table. Here *Dives* sits in his Palace, *cloathed richly*, *faring sumptuously every day*; whilst *Lazarus* lieth at his gate, *naked and hungry*. But then God will render to every one according to his deeds, Rom. 2. 6. Thus you see, there will be a Day of Judgment.

Oh how terrible will this day of Judgment be unto the Unregenerate, and wicked! To them it will be a Day of Wrath, a Day of Trouble and Distress; a Day of Darkness and Gloominess; then shall the Drunkard drink deepest of the Cup of God's Wrath: the Fornicator and Adulterer, who burned with the Fire of Lust, burn in the Fire of

50 *The dreadful Condition of the*

Hell. Then shall the worldling and covetous Wretch feel his loads of ill-gotten Goods, sinking & drowning him in perdition & destruction, pressing him down to the bottom of the infernal Lake.

Oh Sinner! How doth it concern thee to retire into some secret place, and there seriously to ponder on this Day of Judgment? Ask thine heart this question, Is it certain there will be a Day of Judgment or no? If it be certain; Oh then why do I not prepare for it by breaking of my sins, and making my peace with God, before that Day come upon me? Why do I not labour for an interest in Christ, by whom alone I can be freed from eternal death and condemnation? Why do I not now give all diligence to make my Calling and Election sure? *Oh Sinner! reason thus with thy self; thou knowest not of what advantage a few such serious thoughts may be to thy Soul.*

When Paul Preach'd to the Athenians, he urg'd them to repent and turn from their sins, from this very ground and reason, *Because the Lord had appointed a Day in which he will judge the World in righteousness*, Act. 17. 30, 31. *Oh repent therefore, and turn ye from your wicked ways, for why will ye die and perish eternally in your sins? Seek unto the Lord while he may be found. and call upon him while he is nigh.* Christ now stands knocking at the door of thine heart by the Ministers of his Word, the Motions of his Spirit, and Checks of thine own Conscience: Oh give him speedy and willing entertainment! The time will come when thou wilt knock with the foolish Virgins, and shall not be heard: and repent with Judas, and not to be accepted. For the Lord will have his day when thine is past, and a Day of Judgment for thy punishment, that didst slight and reject the Day of Mercy for thine amendment

II. For

II. For the Person who shall be the Judge. It is Christ that shall be Judge; who shall, in a visible shape, both judge and pronounce sentence upon all Men, as the Sentence of *Absolution* on the Elect, so the Sentence of *Condemnation* on the Wicked.

Indeed judging the World, being a work *ab extra*, which respects the creatures, it is common to the whole Trinity; So that neither the *Father* nor the *Holy Ghost* are excluded; but yet it is in Scripture more especially appropriated to the Son. And that partly as a Recompence of his Humiliation; and partly because the Proceedings of the Judgment being *visible*, it seemed convenient that the Judge himself should be conspicuous. And therefore Christ in his humane nature shall judge the World, and denounce the Doom of *Condemnation* against the wicked ones: yet shall he do all as *Immanuel*, God and Man.

III. For the Order of Christ's proceeding in Judgment at the last Day.

I. There will be a *Citation* of all, both dead and living Men, with the Devils, to come to judgment. *We must all appear*, saith the Apostle, 2 Cor. 5. 10. All, without exception, of any must make their appearance, High and Low, Rich and Poor, King and Beggar, Male and Female.

Oh what a great day will that be, when the whole World shall be cited and summoned to appear together at once!

Q. *If you ask how they shall be summoned?*

A. By a shout from Heaven, and the sound of a Trumpet, which shall alarm this sleeping Earth; and at which Hell shall shake, all Graves shall open, and yield up their Prisoners, which they have fast kept in the Chains of death, from all Ages since the beginning of the World. Yea, the Sea

shall give up her dead which are in it, Rev. 20, 13.

II. Upon this Citation and Summons, there will be a Resurrection from the Dead, and such a change of the living, as if they had been a long time dead, and were raised to life again. And as the Graves shall then give up their dead Bodies, so Hell shall give up her living Souls, which shall enter into their old Carcases to receive a greater Condemnation; Oh, what woful salutations will there be between that Body and Soul, which living together in the height of iniquity, must now be re-united to suffer the fulness of their misery!

III. After the Resurrection follows a Collection, and gathering together of all Men and Devils in the World; but with this difference. The Elect being gathered together by Angels, shall with great joy be caught up into the Air to meet the Lord, *Mat. 24. 31.* But the Reprobate together with the Devil and his Angels, shall with extream horror and confusion be drawn and dragg'd into his presence, *Rev. 6. 15, 16.* Ah Sinner, what terror and amazement will then seize upon thee, when like a Malefactor thou art brought against thy will before the Judgment-seat of Christ.

IV. After this follows a Separation of the good from the bad, of the Elect from the Reprobate. For Christ at the first appearing of all before his Judgment-seat, to testify his gracious favour and good respect to Believers, separates them from others, and sets them on his right-hand, as a flock of Sheep whom he intends to take for his own. And then will he set the wicked and unbelievers on his left hand, to testify as his rejecting them, so his purpose to pass a terrible Doom upon them, as himself expresseth, *Mat. 25. 22, 23.*

V. After this follows conviction of the Wicked, and

and a discovery of all their Works; which is proper to go before giving of sentence. For in all our Courts of Justice there is no Man condemned till he be convicted. And therefore this Court of Christ being the exactest Court for Equity and Justice, we may well conclude, that there will be no Man condemned, till he be convicted, and his offences laid open before all.

All the *Wickednesses* of their lives shall be brought forth to light, and made to stare them in the face: and with such unquestionable evidence charged upon them, that they shall stand speechless before their Judge, not having a word to say to excuse and acquit themselves of this dreadful Charge.

Touching the Means of Conviction, know that this Conviction will be by the opening of two Books, which we find mentioned in Scripture.

1. The Book of God's Remembrance.
2. The Book of every Man's Conscience.

The former we find mentioned, *Mal. 3. 16. A Book of Remembrance was written before God.* God hath a *Book of Remembrance*, as of the good Works and Actions of the Godly; so of the evil Works and Actions of the Wicked, wherein their most secret abominations are registred and recorded. Sinner, all the *Wickednesses* of thy life, the secret Villanies that thine heart hath been privy to, which no eye of Man ever saw, or suspected; all thy Chamber Sins, all thy twilight Sins, all thy works of the Night, and of Darknes; yea secret and open, which thou hast long since forgotten, and buried out of thy sight; all these are written and Booked up before the Lord against that terrible day.

The latter Book, namely the *Book of Conscience*, we find mentioned, *Jer. 17. 1. The Sin of Judah is written*

written with a Pen of Iron, & with the Point of a Diamond, it is graven upon the Table of their Hearts. That is, their Sins are so fixed in their Hearts & Consciences, that they cannot be forgotten, but the Memory of them all shall be revived. And with the Apostle, *Their Conscience also bearing witness, & accusing them in the Day when God shall judge the Secrets of Men by Jesus Christ*, Rom. 2. 15. In this Book of Conscience, which God hath given to every Man & Woman, are written all their Thoughts, Words & Actions; yea their sinful Omissions, as well as their sinful Commissions; their secret Impurities, as well as their open Impieties.

Ah, in what a woful case will thy heart then be? what horror & astonishment will then possess thy Soull when all thy Lyes and Oaths, all thy Railings and rotten Speeches, all thy filthy and unclean Thoughts, thy mispent time in Taverns and Ale-houses, thy Worldliness and Covetousness, the Vanities and Rebellions of thy whole life, shall be brought to thy remembrance, and at once charg'd upon thy graceless Soul.

2. Yea, at the day of Judgment there will be a discovery of thy Sins to all the World. For as the Apostle speaketh, 1 Cor. 4. 5. *Hidden things shall on that day be brought to light*. They shall not only be called to remembrance by the Sinner himself, but likewise exposed to the view and censure of others. There is no sin so secretly and closely committed, but then shall be discovered to the view of all. There is scarce a wicked Man in the World, tho never so formal, but he hath at some time or other, committed some such sin in secret, which he would not have others to know for all the World. But know for certain, that at the Day of Judgment, all the World shall hear thereof. For then all thy
secret

secret sins, and close villanies, shall be discover'd, and laid open before Angels, Men, and Devils: thy secret Whoredoms, and close Adulteries, thy Pilferings, and Stealings, thy false Weights and Measures, thy Hypocrisies and Dissemblings, shall be discovered to the view of all, and that to thine eternal shame and confusion. And therefore the Day of Judgment is called *the Day of Revelation*, Rom. 2. 5. When many Murthers, Thefts, Adulteries, and other abominations, which come not to light here, shall at that day be made known & discovered to the view of all. Yea, then not only thy Words and Actions, but also thy secret Thoughts & Imaginations, how vain and wanton, how filthy & abominable soever they have been, shall appear to the view of all. Never therefore adventure upon the committing of any sin in hope of secrecy, because thou seemest safe from the Eyes of Men. For suppose thy sin lieth undiscovered unto the last and great Day, yet then shall it out with a witness, & be made manifest to the view of all.

Now I know no better way to prevent the discovery of your Sins at that great Day, than here, in this time and Day of Grace, to call your selves to an account, to search and examine your own Hearts and Lives, and then to judge and condemn your selves for your manifold Sins and Transgressions. For, as the Apostle speaketh, 1 Cor. 11. 31. *If we judge our selves, we shall not be condemned of the Lord.* Oh therefore let us here often keep a Day of Judgment in our own Souls & Consciences, by a serious examining of our selves concerning our Sins, and judging and condemning our selves for the same! and then let us in all humility prostrate our selves at the Throne of Grace, pleading the Mercy of God and Merits of Christ for the
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pardon and forgiveness of them all: giving no rest to our Souls, till we have some comfortable evidence and assurance thereof, which will cause us to lift up our heads with joy at the great Day of Accompt.

VI. After conviction & manifestation of all these sinful Actions, follows the Sentence of Condemnation; and what it is, our Saviour himself hath shewed, *Mat. 25. 41. Depart from me ye cursed into everlasting Fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels.* Oh dreadful sentence! every word whereof carrieth much terror in it, and breatheth nothing but woe and misery: yea, Fire and Brimstone.

Depart from me] that is, from Jesus Christ, the Fountain of Bliss and Happiness, which in truth is a most grievous Misery; for in his presence there is fulness of Joy and Pleasures for evermore.

Ye Cursed] To depart from Christ were Hell enough, but thou must also go with a curse, even a curse that comprehends all Woes and Miseries under it. And truly to be under God's curse is the quintessence of Misery.

Into everlasting fire] What, into fire? and into everlasting fire? Ah wretches! cursed indeed. For as the Prophet *Isaiah* speaketh, *Isa. 33. 14. Who can dwell with devouring fire? Who can dwell with everlasting burnings?* which shall not be quenched night nor day, but fed continually with Rivers of Brimstone, and kept still in flame and fierceness by the unquenchable Wrath of the just God, to all eternity. The Torment of the Wicked in Hell will be, as without any intermission, so without any end. After they have there been tormented Hundreds, Thousands, Millions of Days, Years and Ages, their Torments will be as far from ending, as if they were then beginning. And is not this misery enough? even beyond the Expression
of

of Men or Angels. If a Man knew he must lie in a flaming Fire but one day or hour, Oh what fear and horror would possess his Soul! But what is a Day, or an Hour, or an Age, to eternity? Oh then what stupidity and senselessness hath possessed the Hearts of sinful Men, who by this, are not frightened from their sins? The fear of *Nebuchadnezzar's* fiery Furnace made Men do any thing to avoid it. And shall not the fear of everlasting fire in Hell, make Men do any thing to escape it? This methinks should awaken them, and cause them not only to humble themselves for their sins, and to beg the Pardon of them; but also to cast away their transgressions; to strive against them, watch against them, pray against them: begging power and strength from Christ, to keep down the power of their Lusts that hurry them on in their sinful ways. It is one of the Wonders of the World, how Men, who do beleive the Word of Christ to be true, that *the wicked shall go into everlasting fire*, can wittingly and wilfully adventure upon sinful ways, the end of which they know will be so dreadful & astonishing.

Prepared for the Devil and his Angels } That is, you shall not only be cast into a Lake of Fire and Brimstone, but you shall there dwell with those hellish Fiends the Devil and his Angels, who will be continually insulting over you with hellish exprobrations for neglecting so great Salvation offered unto you time after time; and being so foolish as to lose the Joys & Pleasures of Heaven, which last to all eternity, for the enjoyment of some base lust, which lasted but for a season.

Oh what terror and trembling, what horror & amazement will seize on their Souls, that have received this dreadful sentence of condemnation! How will they run like Men distracted to the Mountains

tains and Hills for covert and shelter? How will they then beg and yell again for mercy to a Judge that is justly inexorable? I say justly inexorable to them, having scornfully rejected his many loving Invitations, and earnest Beseechings by his Ministers to accept of that Peace and Reconciliation which he hath purchased by his Blood. Oh that Men would consider, that one tear or sigh of a penitent Heart will now more prevail for attainment of mercy, than all their bitter and importunate yellings in that day of God's wrath!

VII. After the Promulgation of the Sentence, followeth the Execution, and sending of the Persons judged to their everlasting estate (as it is written, *Mat. 25. 46. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment.* So that now comes the eternal Separation from Christ and possession of those torments, which are easeless and endless. For then shall they be hurried by the Devils as their Jaiors, out of Christ's presence, & dragged into the bottomless lake of outer darkness. Oh the hellish crys and horrid shrieks that then will be heard! no heart can conceive, or imagine what an hideous cry it will be.

Hadst thou now an Heart to turn from thy Sins unto God, by true and unfeigned repentance, and to pray unto him for mercy in and through the Merits of Jesus Christ, there were hope of mercy. But at the Day of Judgment thy Repentance and thy Prayers will nothing avail. The Judge will not then be intreated by thee; and no marvel, seeing thou wouldst not hearken to him in the day of his merciful visitation: but tho he sent unto thee, Messenger after Messenger, Embassador after Embassador, to wooe and beseech thee to abandon thy sins, and to accept of him for thy Lord and Saviour; yet wouldst thou not leave one beloved sin, nor deny

one fleshly lust for all his entreaties. And therefore on that day will he not be intreated by thee, notwithstanding thy manifold Cries & Prayers. If thou wilt not beleive me, hear Christ's own words to this purpose. Prov. 1. 24. &c. *Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no Man regarded. But ye have set at naught all my counsel, and would none of my reproof; I will also laugh at your calamity, I will mock when your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you: then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer: they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me.* Oh! how will it then wound thy very Soul to remember thy folly in neglecting thy season and refusing so great salvation.

Ah, Sinner, that thou wouldst now forethink of this dreadful time, and woful misery, which hangs over thine head! that when thou art alone, thou wouldst seriously consider with thy self, as the certainty and dreadfulnes of this day, to what thy condition is like to be, that thou mightest thereby be stirred up to make out after Christ by whom thou mayest escape the Wrath to come.

C H A P. X.

Shewing the miserable and dreadful Condition of the Unregenerate after the Day of Judgment.

HAVING shewed you the miserable Estate of the Unregenerate at the Day of Judgment, I shall proceed to shew you their dreadful estate after the Day of Judgment: Which in general is most cursed, & therefore, saith our Saviour unto them, *Mat. 25. 41.*

Depart from me ye cursed. That cursed estate is manifest.

1. By privation of all felicity.
2. By subjection to all misery.

3. By fundry resemblances.

4. By the perpetuity thereof.

Of these in their order.

I. The miserable and cursed estate of the Unregenerate consists in their privation of all that happiness, which believers do enjoy in the presence of God, in whose presence there is fulness of joy and at whose right-hand there are pleasures for evermore. Were there no positive sensible misery, this privation of God's presence were enough (if they understood it) to make the damned future estate most accursed, to make Hell to be Hell, without any fire. For as fulness of joy and pleasure is had by the enjoying of God's presence, so fulness of grief and sorrow doth possess the hearts of all those who are deprived thereof. Couldst thou be but for one moment wrapt up into Heaven, and see a Glimpse of that infinite Glory which God hath prepar'd for all that love & fear him, thou wouldst soon acknowledge as much.

II. Besides this *privation of felicity there is a subjection to all misery.* Besides the *pain of loss*, there is a *pain of sense*, which the damned endure: which is in it self intolerable, unutterable, and unconceivable. It were misery enough to be tormented with the Gout, Cholick, Stone, Tooth ach, or the like: but should these, together with the most exquisite tortures that the Wit of Man could invent, meet together in one Man, at one instant, yet would they come infinitely short of these. All pains & torments, all racks & tortures whatsoever, which Men are capable of suffering here, are but sparks in comparison of the Flames of Gods Wrath, & Fleabites to the Stings & Scorpions beneath, where there is torment without ease, horror without comfort, wrath without pity. There are no sorrows like to the sorrows of
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the damned, wherewith the Lord afflicteth them in the Day of his fierce Wrath, when he will pour out all the Vials of his fury upon them, and will make them at once to pay for all the wrongs they have done to his name, for the contempt of his Mercy, their affronts to his Justice, for the abuse of his patience, & long suffering, for their mispent time, for their swearing and cursing, for their whoring, and drinking, for their prophaning his Sabbaths, for their hating and persecuting his People.

Oh! What weeping and wailing? what sighing and groaning? what cursing and banning will there then be heard?

The Extremity of the Torments of Hell further appeareth in this, that they are universal. Not only this or that part of thy body shall be tortured and tormented, but every part and member thereof. As all have joyned in sin, so must they all partake of the Torment.

The Pain which Men here endure, is for the most part particular, some pained in their head, some in their back, and some in their feet: And some of these Pains are oftentimes so extream, as thou wouldst not willingly undergo them to gain a World. But for a Man to be tortur'd tormented in every part & member of his body at once, must needs be very grievous, which is the Condition of all the damned in Hell.

By this you may a little conceive the extremity of their Torments: But if I had the Tongue of Men & Angels I could not express to the full. For as in Heaven there is such a fulness of Joy as the Heart of Man is not able to conceive, much less the Tongue of Man able to express; So in Hell there is such a fulness of sorrow and torment, as is both beyond expression or conception.

Oh

Oh Sinner, wouldest thou never come into this place of torment? descend into it daily: look into the Pit often, if thou wouldest not fall into it. If Heaven & all the Joy & Glory there will not afford Arguments enough to draw thee on after thy God; see if Hell, & the Torments thereof will not yield thee Arguments enough to withdraw thee from thy sins. In all temptations unto sin, consider the fearful Issue & Effect thereof: & tho' it seem never so delightful and agreeable to thy natural humour, yet ask, But what comes after? Let the dreadful consequence thereof, which (without true & unfeign'd repentance) is no less than eternal fire, deter thee from the same. Ah Sinner, Sinner! when thou art bathing thy Soul by the Fire of Lust, consider how for the same thou mayst burn in the everlasting Flames of Hell. When thou art drenching thy self with the voluptuous draughts of thy carnal pleasure, think what a drench, what a poysonous & bitter Cup is prepar'd for thee below: And this may be a special means to kill that Lust which will otherwise kill thy Soul. Want of consideration of the fearful Issues & Effects of sin, is questionless the cause of so much Sin and Wickedness in the World.

III. the Misery of the damned is set forth in Scripture by the sundry resemblances: as,

I. Darknes, yea, outer darknes. *But the Children of the kingdom shall be cast into outer darknes, there shall be weeping and gnashing of Teeth,* Mar. 8 12 As light is one of the comfortablest things that Man can enjoy; So darknes is most horrible & terrible. Darknes was one of the *Egyptians* Plagues, which were all fearful effects of Gods wrath. It is counted a great severity of punishment to cast Men into a dark Dungeon: For darknes doth much affright Men, especially if they hear hideous & terrible noises.

ses. What then will be the darkness of Hell, where shall be nothing but weeping & wailing, howling, & gnashing of teeth, with such like effects of fearful terror. This is called *outer darkness*, because it is out of the place of bliss, the place of light, which is no small aggravation thereof.

2 Torment, as Luk. 16. 23. *And in hell the rich Man lift up his eyes being in torment.* Now torment is an extremity of pain, whereof Man is very sensible, & which is highly grievous unto him. Many torments which Men inflict, cause such as are tormented to cry & howl, and wish they were dead rather than to live in such torment. Oh then what is the Torment, which God in his fierce wrath, inflicteth on the damned in Hell! whom he will make to feel his heavy Hand to be the Hand of a mighty God! All tortures & torments considered together are not comparable thereunto. Take the pains of all diseases incident to our nature: Stone, Gout, Cholick, Cramp, or what other can be named. Add hereunto, all the most exquisite tortures that cruel Men have inflicted upon others: as rack, strapado, boyling in Lead, pulling the Flesh from the Bones with hot Pincers, & such like. Add also hereunto all the Anguish, Horror, & Terror, that ever any Man felt in his Soul, Mind & Conscience; let all these be joyn'd together, they are but a Flea-bite in comparison of Hell torments. The reason is evident, because all the fore-mentioned torments here endured, may stand with God's love and are oft inflicted on his dear Children; But that torment is a fruit of his wrath, wherein he sets himself to make Sinners feel the weight of his indignation.

O foolish Sinner! thy pleasures are tormenting pleasures; thy gains, and thine ease, that now thou blestest thy self in, they are tormenting gains, a tormenting

tormenting ease. Now thou drinkest the sweet, but beware whatever they are in thy mouth, they are torment in the Belly. Buy not an hours ease or pleasure, at the price of an eternity of torment.

3. Another resemblance whereby the Misery of the damned is set forth, is *Fire*, as *Mat. 18. 9.* This of all other metaphors is most frequently used, and of all others it is the fittest. For *Fire* is the fiercest kind of torment that is, and the most intolerable. Great Quest. is made about the kind of it. *Whether the Fire of Hell be material and corporeal fire, or no.* Surely it is such a Fire as shall torment both Body & Soul, & that much more intolerable than any fire here below. *Brimstone* mingled with fire, makes it burn more fiercely; therefore *Brimstone* is oft added to Hell fire, to aggravate the torment thereof. Yea, it is said to be a *Lake of Fire and Brimstone*, *Rev. 20. 10.* which implieth a great quantity thereof to make it the hotter.

This methinks should sowre the pleasure of all thy sinful lusts, and provoke thee forthwith to set upon that stricter course of life, that more serious circumspect, conscientious walking, whereby thou mayst escape those heavy things.

Oh, look about thee while it is call'd to day! run over to Christ, lay hold on his righteousness, stoop to his Scepter; beg of God, that whatsoever he deny thee he would not deny his Son to thee, by whom alone thou canst be freed from this tormenting fire, Otherwise woe & alas that ever thou wert born.

But oh, how wonderful prodigal are we generally of our Souls, when that for the vile things here below we are so ready to prostitute them to the Lust of Satan, & expose them to the Torments of Hell fire. Whereas alas, *What is it to gain the World, and to lose our Souls?* What, to spend out days in mirth

mirth and jollity, and in a moment to be cast into Hell? It is easie for a secure unbelieving Soul to read and hear of this fire. But wo, and ten thousand woes to all such, who shall feel, and endure and prove by their experience how hot it is.

IV. The Misery of the damned is likewise set forth in Scripture by the perpetuity, and eternity of their torment. *Their worm dieth not, and their fire is not quenched, but continueth to burn without end,* Mark 9. 44. And therefore is called *unquenchable fire, and everlasting fire.* As the *Salamander* is said to live in the Fire: So shall the wicked live for ever in the Fire of Hell. Tho' they seek for death, yet they shall not find it; tho' they be always burning, yet they shall not be consumed: tho' they be always gnawed upon by the Worm of Conscience, yet they shall never be devoured: Which makes the Misery of the damned in Hell most exquisitely miserable.

If there might be any end of their torments, tho' it should be after so many millions of Years, as there are Sands on the Sea-shoar, or Stars in the Firmament, it would be some comfort to those who endure them. But Eternity is the very Hell of Hells, and that which most of all breaks the very hearts of the damned. The present sense of pain being not so grievous to the damned, as it is to think that after thousands, yea, thousand and thousands of Years, they shall be as far either from end, or from ease, as they were the first hour of their falling into it. Surely if to a Man tormented with the Gout, Stone, or Cholick, one night seemeth exceeding long: Oh how long do you think eternity (that night which shall never know morning) will seem to those who shall be tormented and roaring in a Bed of flame, with wicked
Friends

Fiends and Devils about them, daily and hourly adding to their torment? If one short nights pain be so tedious and grievous, what will that eternal night be?

Oh that I could prevail with thee once a day, to steep thy thoughts in a serious meditation of the Eternity of Hell torments! Certainly it would abate the Heat of thy Lusts, and take off the edge of thy love to thy utmost pleasing vanities, & stop thee in the eager pursuit of thy carnal pleasures. For wouldst thou be content to run the hazard of such torments for thy present ease? of such plagues for thy present pleasures? of such an Eternity for a few jocund hours? Oh when wilt thou awake from this folly!

Thus much for the clearing and setting forth of the first Truth to be embraced towards the working of Regeneration in Mens Souls; namely, That every Man in his state of Unregeneracy is in a miserable and dreadful Condition. Wherein I have the longer insisted, that thereby I might startle & awaken Unregenerate Men out of their carnal security, unto a lively Sense and Apprehension of the dreadful Danger they are in, so long as they live and lye in their Unregenerate estate: and so counterminne the great Design of the Devil against their Souls, which is to keep them blindfold and ignorant of their wretched miserable state, by perswading them that their condition is as good and safe as the best.

Now stand, Sinner, stand and pause a while on what hath been hitherto spoken. Look back and consider, is this thy state? Is this thy portion which hath hitherto been described? Art thou a Sinner? A wilful and impenitent Sinner? And doth not all this belong to thee? Search the Scriptures, believe

believe the Scriptures, and then say if this be not the Place of them that know not God, and obey not the Gospel of Christ.

But hearken, Sinner, wilt thou escape? Wilt thou be redeemed, wilt thou be delivered from all this? Would he be a Messenger of good tydings? Wouldest thou bid him welcome that should bring thee News of Redemption from all this? Why, is there any hope of that? Hope of deliverance? Hope of salvation? What for such a Sinner? What from so great destruction? Why, wilt thou hearken? Consider, consider, what shall further be spoken, and thou shalt see that *there is* yet hope for thee, even for thee, concerning this thing. As great as thy sins are, as great as thy danger is, if thou wilt then, there is hope that thou may'st be saved.

C H A P. XI.

Sheweth that there is hope of mercy for the worst of Sinners.

II. **A** Nother Truth to be embraced in order to thy Regeneration, is this, *That there is hope of mercy for the worst of Sinners.*

Tho' the condition of Men in their state of Unregeneracy be very deplorable, yet it is not desperate: there is hope of mercy for the worst of them, which will appear from a due consideration.

1. Of God's willingness to save the worst of Sinners.

2. Of the all-sufficiency of Christ's Sacrifice.

3. Of Christ's readiness to embrace all poor Sinners, who will but come unto him, and receive him upon the terms of the Gospel.

1. God's willingness to save the worst of Sinners appeareth from his many gracious promises to receive them upon their repentance, *Isa. 55. 7. Let the wicked*

wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. And saith the Prophet Ezekiel, Ezek. 18. 21, 22. If the wicked will turn from all his sins that he hath committed, and keep all my Statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die; All his transgressions that he hath committed, they shall not be mentioned unto him, in his righteousness that he hath done, he shall live. These, and such like gracious promises of God in his word for the encouragement of poor Sinners to turn from their sins unto him, cannot but strongly argue his willingness to have them saved.

2. As if this were not enough to set forth God's willingness, to his promises he hath added an Oath, As I live saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live, Ezek. 33. 11. Here the Lord sweareth by himself, there being no greater to swear by, as if he had said, As sure as I am the true and living God, so certainly I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that he should turn from his wicked ways, and embrace my mercy in Jesus Christ. Because wicked Men are so hardly perswaded of God's willingness to save them, therefore to convince them thereof, and encourage them to turn from their sins unto him, he takes his Oath on it, that he is infinitely more willing that wicked Men should repent and be saved, then that they should perish in their sins, and be damned.

3. God's willingness appeareth from his free offer and tender of Christ to all who will but receive him by the hand of Faith; as none are named, so none are excluded. The Angel that brought from Heaven the tidings of Christ's birth saith, that it was

was for all People: *Behold, saith he, I bring you tidings of great joy which shall be to all People.* There being no state or condition of Men which God hath excluded from salvation by Christ which doth clearly evidence his willingness to save poor Sinners.

Oh Sinner! Seeing God doth freely offer Christ to all without exception of any, do not thou except thy self, limit not where God hath not limited; say not I am unworthy, or my sins are many & heinous, clothed with many aggravating circumstances: but stir up thy self to adventure thy Soul on Christ, upon the general offer of him in the Gospel. The first work of faith in many hath been to adventure their Souls on Christ upon the free offer of him to all indefinitely. Do thou in like manner adventure to cast thy self upon the free grace of God in Christ with resolution to abandon thy lusts for the time to come, and to take Christ for thy Lord & Husband, as well as for thy Priest and Saviour. This is that which God requireth; and if he hath perswaded thine Heart to this, it is a good sign that mercy is intended for thee.

2. His willingness further appeareth by his sending Ministers as his Embassadors unto poor Sinners, upon terms of Peace and Reconciliation, as the Apostle expresseth, *2 Cor. 5. 20. We are Embassadors to beseech you to be reconciled to God.* As if he had said, *We are commanded by the Lord our Master, to offer you terms of Peace and Reconciliation, to proffer you Peace and Pardon, if you will heartily turn from your sins unto God: We are sent as Embassadors to acquaint you what Christ hath done, and suffered for your redemption, how he hath fulfill'd the Law for you, and offered up his Life as a Sacrifice and Satisfaction to God's Justice for your sins; & how you may be happy for ever, if you will rest upon Christ's perfect*

fect righteousness, and all-sufficient Sacrifice for life & salvation, & give up your selves unto him, to serve and obey his Laws and Commandments. I do here therefore as God's Ambassador, in his Name, proclaim to the worst of you, to the greatest and oldest Sinner, that you may have Mercy and Salvation, if you will abandon your lusts and close with Jesus Christ, upon the Terms of the Gospel, receiving him for your *King, Priest, and Prophet.*

Oh how can we but stand amazed at the Riches of Gods mercy and goodness, that when we, upon the Knees of our Souls, should have sought unto him for Peace and Reconciliation, yet that he being the great Lord of Heaven, and of Earth, should condescend so far, as to send Embassadors unto us, sinful dust and ashes, to intreat us to be reconcil'd to him, to accept his grace and favour. Oh how doth this evidence his great willingness that poor Sinners should not perish, but have everlasting life! Certainly if God had taken more pleasure in your damnation than in your salvation, he would never have sent his Ministers as Embassadors to shew you the way and means of salvation, by receiving Christ as your Lord and Saviour & giving up your selves unto him; he would never have perswaded you by so many arguments, and beseeched you to turn from your sins, unto him, that your Souls might live in glory to all eternity.

6. *God's willingness to save the very worst of Sinners is most lively represented in the Parable of the Prodigal,* as it is recorded, *Luk. 15. 20. &c.* where we read how the *Prodigal* no sooner resolv'd to go to his Father, & acknowledge his Offence, but his Father prevented him: For when he was yet a great way off, his Father saw him and had compassion, and ran and fell on his Neck, and kissed him. Where there are several passages very observable in the Father of the Prodigal.

1. His quick Observation. For when he was yet a great way off, his Father saw him. Before he espy'd his Father, his Father saw him. Though God is many times unwilling to see the Sinner, yet is he at all times very willing to espy the penitent. Yea, no sooner doth a Sinner resolve to turn from his sins unto God, but he espies him and pities him.

2. His present commiseration. His Father saw him & had compassion on him. Tho' God looks on obdurate sinners with indignation, yet he looks on the penitent with commiseration. When the Heart of a Sinner is penitentially touched, then the Bowels of Gods mercy are moved within him. When Ephraim repented and returned, the Lord said, *My Bowels are troubled for him, I will surely have mercy on him, Jer. 31. 20.*

3. His speedy readines to embrace him. it is said the Son went to his Father, but the Father ran to meet his penitent Son, shewing how ready & swift the Lord is to shew mercy to a penitent returning Sinner. A Sinner no sooner returns from his sins unto God by repentance, but God turns to him in mercy.

4. His wonderful tenderness. The Father fell on his Neck. To have taken him by the Hand had been much, but to fall on his Neck and embrace him, & that as he was in his stinking loathsome rags, was a greater favour than could be expected. How open are the Arms of Mercy to embrace a penitent returning Sinner!

5. His strong Affection, expressed by kissing his penitent Son. For, as it follows, he kissed him. He did not only embrace him, but he likewise kissed him. And as St. Austin observeth, *Nondum una verba audito, squalidum & deformem amplectitur, &c.* before the Son had spoken one word unto his Father the Father falleth upon his Neck, and kissed his

ragged and deformed Son ; Which sheweth Gods willingness to receive and embrace all poor penitent Sinners, that have but a thought of turning from their sins unto him. Yea, the Fathers kissing of his returning Son, was to shew that he joyced as much at his penitential return, as he had griev'd at his sinful departure.

Oh Sinner, what an encouragement should this be unto thee to turn from thy sins unto God? Who hath, as an eye of mercy to espy a returning Sinner ; so an heart full of mercy & compassion to pity a returning Sinner ; and feet of mercy to meet a turning Sinner ; and arms of mercy to embrace a returning Sinner ; and lips of mercy to kiss a returning Sinner, in token that he is reconcil'd to him. Oh therefore let me prevail with thee, whosoever thou art, how many & heinous loever thy sins are, to turn from them unto God by true & unfeigned repentance, & that with hope of mercy & acceptance in & through the merits & intercession of Jesus Christ.

II. That there is hope of mercy for the worst of Sinners, appeareth from the All-sufficiency of Christ's sacrifice offered upon the Cross, & the fullness of satisfaction that was thereby made to the justice of God for the sins of the whole world. So much the Apostle expresth, where he saith, *He is able to save them to the utmost, that come unto God by him.* The word, *tranſl. able*, doth imply Power to do a thing. And the word *utmost* is translated, *uttermoſt*, is of a very large extent ; it extends so far that we cannot look beyond it, no not in our thoughts : for let a Man imagine his cause to be never so desperate, his sins to be never so many and heinous yet Christ by his Death is able to save him from them all.

And therefore this we must lay as a Foundation-Truth, that Christ's Sacrifice was a full satisfaction

satisfaction to the justice of his Father for the Sins of the World; it being the sacrifice of the Son of God; even of him who was God as well as Man. For this is that which added an infinite value to what Christ did and suffered for our redemption, that it was the Obedience, — and the Suffering of the Son of God; of him who was God equal with the Father.

Labour therefore to get thine heart truly satisfied in the All-sufficiency of Christ's Sacrifice that his death was a full satisfaction to God's Justice for thy sins; for otherwise when either thy Conscience or the Devil begin to aggravate thy sins, & to be set before thee, the number & heinousness of them, thou wilt be at a loss, and even ready to sit down in despair: whereas if thou didst clearly apprehend what full satisfaction the death of Christ was to God's Justice for all thy sins, thou wouldst not fear what either thy Conscience or the Devil could object against thee. In *Rom. 8 33*. We read how the Apostle from the consideration of Christ's All-sufficient Sacrifice & full satisfaction to God's justice by his death, did triumph over Sin, & Satan. For having treated thereof in the former part of the Chap. in the latter part thereof, *ver. 33, 34*. he speaks as one ravished with abundance of comfort, yea, challengeth the Devil and all the world to object, what they could against the pardon of his sins: *Who saith he shall lay any thing to the Charge of Gods Elect? It is God that justifieth: Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died* As if he had said, let Conscience and Carnal reason; let Law and Sin, let Hell and Devil object what they can; let them object the number and heinousness of my sins, what is that? Seeing Christ hath died, even Christ the Son of God, hath offered up his own Life as an All-sufficient Sacrifice,

and thereby abundantly satisfied God's justice for my sins. Beloved, the Case between God & us & our Saviour Jesus Christ, is not much unlike the Case of a Creditor, a Debtor and a Surety. Tho' the Debtor be altogether unable to satisfy his Debt, or to contribute any thing thereunto; yet if his Surety hath fully discharged the Debt, and cancelled the Bond, the Debtor is safe enough from Imprisonment, or danger of Arrest. In like manner though we were much indebted unto God, & were no way able to make the least satisfaction for our sins; yet seeing our surety Jesus Christ, hath taken upon him the Debt of our Sins, and fully satisfied Gods justice for the same, by offering up his own Life as an All sufficient Sacrifice upon the Cross, we shall not need to fear the accusations of Conscience, or of Carnal Reason, or of all the Devils in Hell, if we do apply the merits of Christs Death unto our Souls comfort.

III That there is hope of Mercy for the worst of sinners, appeareth from Christs *willingness* to receive & embrace all poor Sinners, *who will but come unto him, & receive him* upon the Terms of the Gospel.

I. Christs *willingness* appeareth from his frequent *personal Invitations* of all sorts of Sinners, *even the worst, to come unto him for life and salvation, as Mat. 11. 28. Come unto me all ye that labour, and are heavy laden and I will give you rest.* In which we find no exception either of Persons or Sins: but whosoever thou art, rich, or poor, male or female; how many and heinous soever thy sins are, if thou art but sensible of them, thou art invited to go to Jesus Christ, and to cast thy self, and the burden of thy sins upon him. And, Rev. 22. 17. *Let him that is a thirst come, and whoever will, let him take of the Water of Life freely,* That is, in whomsoever there is but an earnest will, and long-
ing

ing desire to partake of Christ, and of the benefit of his death and passion they are invited to come unto him. Now these gracious Invitations of Jesus Christ unto poor thirsty sinners to come unto him, that their Souls might live, must needs argue his incomparable willingness to have them saved.

2. Christ knowing our backwardness to come unto him, to the forementioned Invitations adds his awakening excitation, or proclamation, crying out, *Ho, every one that thirsteth come ye to the Waters, &c.* Isa. 55. 1. And because many poor Souls are apt to say, *Alas! there is nothing in me to commend me unto Christ; I have no goodness, no righteousness of mine own;* therefore Christ adds, *He that hath no Money,* that is, he that hath no goodness, no righteousness of his own, which is there meant by *Money*, let him come. And indeed they are the fittest to go unto Jesus Christ, for it is the empty Soul that is most capable of Christ, the Soul emptied of all self-righteousness, and self-goodness. Whereas that Soul which with the Church of *Laodicea*, is rich and full with a conceit of its own righteousness, hath no room for Christ.

3. Christ's willingness appeareth by the many sweet and gracious promises which he hath made in his Word unto all those who by faith come unto him. As that known promise, Mat. 11. 28. *Come unto me all ye who labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest,* that is, I will ease you and refresh you, I will comfort you with the assurance of the pardon of your sins, I will give you peace of Conscience here, and eternal peace and rest with me for ever in my Kingdom. And questionless, one special reason, why many find so little peace and comfort in their Souls, is, because they go not unto Jesus Christ, they cast not themselves and the burthen of their sins upon him, who is the Foun-

tain of Peace and Comfort, and from whom alone it is to be had.

And *Mark 16. 15, 16.* saith our Saviour, *He that believeth shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned,* that is, He who goeth out of himself unto Christ for Life, shall be saved. But he that believeth not shall be damned, that is, He who refuseth to go unto Jesus Christ, preferring his lusts and corruptions before him, shall be cast into that burning lake, where is nothing but weeping and wailing, and gnashing of teeth.

Oh how earnestly doth Christ press Sinners to come unto him that they might have life! promising Heaven and Salvation upon their coming; and threatening Hell and damnation upon their refusing: And what more prevailing argument could he use, to perswade Sinners to come unto him? Which must needs evidence his exceeding and great willingness to embrace them with the Arms of his Mercy upon their coming.

4. Christ's willingness appeareth by his rejecting of none who sincerely go unto him, tho' never so weak and worthless in themselves. Never did any Sinner go to him, but he accepted of him, as himself expresseth, *Joh. 6. 37. All that the Father giveth me, shall come to me and him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out;* but receive him to mercy. Hath Christ promised this, and will he not be as good as his Word? Did he ever break his word with any poor Soul, though never so unworthy? Did he ever cast away any who came unto him? And is he not the same Yesterday, to Day, and for ever?

'Go Sinner, fear not, go upon the credit of this word, which he hath spoken, *I will in no wise cast them out.* Tho' the Devil say, go not; tho' thy misgiving Heart say, go not, he will not regard thee,

thee, he will never look on such a vile wretch, he will cast thee out; yet since he hath said, he will not, go and thou shalt find mercy.

Thus have I by several demonstrations proved, as God the Fathers willingness to save the worst of Sinners; So Christ's readiness to embrace all poor Sinners, who will but come unto him for life and salvation? Wherein I have the longer insisted, because I know no better argument to prevail with Sinners, to turn from their sins unto God by true and unfeigned repentance, and to close with Jesus Christ by a true and lively faith, than a serious consideration, as of God's readiness to save the worst of Sinners upon their turning unto him; so of Christ's willingness to embrace all poor Sinners, who will come unto him, and receive him as their Lord and saviour.

I have read a Story of a *Gentlewoman* who was condemned to die for killing her own Child, whereupon divers Ministers came to visit her, and perceiving her little affected with her sin, and sad condition, they laboured to let before her the heinousness of her sin, and the dreadfulnes of her Condition, without hearty and deep repentance: All which little moved her, seeming rather the more hard'ned in her sin; But at last another Reverend Divine hearing of her obdurate hardness, notwithstanding all that was said unto her, went and preached unto her the abundant riches of God's mercy in Christ, how ready he was to embrace with the Arms of his free grace every penitent sinner, and how willing Christ was to receive all poor Sinners, who would go unto him, and cast themselves into his arms, how many and heinous soever their sins were, and thereupon told her, there was hope of mercy for her, if she were heartily sorry for her sins, and would adventure her

Soul upon Christ, notwithstanding the greatness and heinousness of her sin? What! Mercy for me, said she, that is impossible, &c. Whereupon the Minister proceeded further to set forth the freeness of God's grace, and riches of his mercy to all penitent and believing sinners, declaring unto her, how God delighted in mercy, and that where sin had abounded, or to that purpose. And thereupon she presently fell a weeping, wringing her Hands and crying for Mercy, and died very comfortably, as it is related; having had the mercy of God abundantly revealed to her before her death.

And truly, sinner, as it was my design, so my hearts desire, in letting forth God's willingness to save the very worst of sinners upon their repentance; and Christs readiness to embrace them with the Arms of his Mercy, that it might have the same effect in thee, as it had in the forementioned Gentlewoman. And oh that the consideration thereof would melt thine heart into tears of unfeigned sorrow for thy sins past, and stir thee up to turn from them unto God by hearty repentance, and to close with Jesus Christ upon the Terms of the Gospel! Oh that I could prevail with thee, as to give a Bill of Divorce to thy lusts and corruptions, so to give up thy self unto Christ, and to adventure thy Soul upon him resting upon his perfect righteousness, & all sufficient Sacrifice for the pardon of thy Sins here and for eternal Life and Salvation hereafter! If Christ be so willing to receive thee, why should it not thou be willing to go unto him, and that with confidence of acceptance? Salvation is this day offered unto thee, the golden Scepter is held out unto thee, Oh stretch forth the hand of Faith to lay hold and embrace the Lord Jesus Christ! So shalt thou be happy to all eternity, *For whosoever believeth in Jesus Christ shall not perish but have everlasting Life,*

Life, Thus much of the Truths to be embraced in order to your Regeneration.

CHAP. XII.

Sheweth the Duties to be practiced in order to your Regeneration.

HAVING shewed you the Truths to be embraced in order to your Regeneration, I come now to the Duties on your part to be practised, & performed.

I. From the consideration of the dreadfulneſs of thy Condition, ſo long as thou continuelt in thine Unregenerate ſtate; and of the hope thou haſt of a bleſſed Change; *Stir up thyſelf in an earneſt longing, reſtleſs deſire after the new Birth, that thou may'ſt in truth ſay, O that I were Regenerate and born anew! Oh that the Image of the Devil might be raſed out, and the Image of God imprinted in me! O that a bleſſed Change were wrought in my Soul, a Change from Nature to Grace, from Darkneſs to Light, from the Kingdom of Satan, to the Kingdom of the Lord Jeſus! Oh that I might become a new Creature, renewed throughout, in all the faculties of my Soul, and all the parts of my Body!*

And know for thy comfort, if thou canſt find any ſuch longing deſire in thy Soul thou art not far from this new Birth, from the work of Regeneration in thy Soul. For this longing deſire after this new Birth, will put thee upoꝛ the Uſe of all the ordinances and means God hath ſanctified for the attaining thereof.

II. *Labour to get thine Heart deeply and thoroughly affected with a ſenſe of thy miſerable Condition by Nature.* It is not ſufficient to know thy Condition to be ſad and deplorable, ſo long as thou continuelt in thine unregenerate eſtate: but thy care & endeavour muſt be to get thine Heart thoroughly affected therewith. If you look into the Scriptures thou ſhalt find this qualification required in thoſe Perſons whom Chriſt came to ſave, and whom he invites to come

unto

unto him. Our blessed Saviour, speaking to *Zache-
us*, saith, *Luke 19. 10. The Son of Man is come to seek
and to save that which is lost.* Where by the lost,
whom Christ came to save, are not meant every Sin-
ner, who indeed are lost Men, but such as have a
spiritual feeling of the woful plight and condition
wherein they are by reason of their sins. And again
saith our Saviour. *Mat. 9. 13. I am not come to call
the righteous but Sinners to Repentance.* As by the
righteous are meant such as are so in their own o-
pinion, and conceit, so by *Sinners* are meant such as
are sensible of their wretched, miserable condition,
and groan under the weight and burden of their
sins; whom Christ especially invites to come unto
him, saying *come unto me all ye that are weary and
heavy laden, and I will give you rest, Mat. 11. 28.*

Q. If any shall ask, how may I get my Heart
deeply affected with a Sense of my miserable Con-
dition by Nature.

A. 1. *Steep thy thoughts frequently in a serious me-
ditation of thy sad and deplorable Condition, so long as
thou continuest in thy unregenerate estate.* How thou
art no better than a *Servant to Sin*, and *Slave to thy
Lusts*, under the bondage and command of *Satan*, do-
ing his drudgery; yea, and under the curle of *God*
and guilt of all thy *Sins*, and liable to all sorts of
Judgments, both *Temporal*, *Spiritual* and *Eternal*.
Consider likewise the *Miseries* which will accom-
pany thee at thy *Death*, and after thy death, even
at the day of *Judgment*, and after the day of *Judg-
ment*, when thou shalt not only be deprived of all
happiness, but exposed to such miseries as neither
the *Tongue of Man* can express, nor the *Heart of
Man* can conceive, and that to all *Eternity*, if thou
dyest in thy unregenerate estate. Ah *Sinner*! if thou
wouldst but frequently chew this bitter *Pill*, it
would not only purge thee of thy sinful corrupti-

ons and noysom humours, which now are predominate in thee, but likewise exceedingly make to thy spiritual health and welfare.

2. Be earnest with God in Prayer that by his Spirit he would convince thee of thy miserable Condition by Nature, and make thee truly and thoroughly sensible thereof.

III. Labour to be truly humbled for thy sins, as the Cause of thy present sad Condition. It is not sufficient to get thine Heart in some measure affected with the sense thereof, but thy care must likewise be to get thine Heart into an humbled and broken frame for the same. Having spent many years in sinning; what canst thou do less then spend some hours in mourning and sorrowing for the same? Which usually goeth before, or at least accompanieth our new Birth: For as no Child is ordinarily born without some throws, so no Man is ordinarily regenerated, & born anew by the Spirit, without some pangs of sorrow and humiliation, tho' not all with a like measure: it being sanctified by God to be the entrance into the state of Grace. O therefore labour in the use of all means God hath sanctified, to get thine Heart kindled, humbled and broken for thy sins! To this end,

1. Look back into thy Life, and call to mind as many of thy sins as possibly thou canst, the Sins of thy Youth, as well as of thy riper years; thy Sins of Omission as well as thy Sins of Commission; yea, the Sins of thy holy Services: Especially call to mind the greatest and grossest of thy Sins, tho' they were committed long ago. Thus did the *Prodigal* begin his humiliation and repentance, by a serious examination of his former course of life, calling to his remembrance his departure from such a *Gracious Father*: his own wandrings in the ways of wickedness, in which he had lost himself, & the

as the Text noteth, Luke 15. 13. He arose and came to his Father, and with tears said unto him, Father, I have sinned against Heaven and against thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy Son. To acknowledge thy self in the general to be a Sinner, works but a formal kind of repentance and humiliation, if any at all: but if thou wouldst be truly humbled, thou must descend to thy special and particular sins, saying, *this evil have I done, and that good have I left undone.*

2. Consider, together with the Number, the heinousness of thy sins. To this end call to mind the aggravating circumstances of them; as how thou hast sinned against the motions of Gods Spirit, the admonitions of his Ministers, the checks of thine own Conscience, against the light of nature; against the patience and long-suffering of God, which should have led thee to repentance.

3. Seriously consider the fearful threatnings against Sin and Sinners, which are all Judgments and Plagues here, and eternal death and condemnation hereafter; and apply them to thy self, reasoning thus, *If the least transgression of the Law deserveth the curse of God, yea all Judgments and Plagues here, & eternal condemnation hereafter; then how many Curses and Plagues? What & how great condemnation have I deserved? Who have committed sins innumerable for number, & heinous in their quality.* And withal consider the truth and faithfulness of God in making good his threatnings as well as his promises.

4. Beg this great Mercy of an humbled Heart from God! for it is he who must strike out stony Hearts, these hard Rocks of ours, before they can yield any Water of rue Repentance.

And that thy Prayers may be the more prevalent, lead that gracious promise of God, to take away the stony

stony hearts out of our flesh, and to give us hearts of flesh. Hath God promised, and is there no hope in the promise? Is there hope, and wilt thou not lay hold on that hope? Plead with thy God upon his own word, *Is not this thy word, O Lord? Hast not thou said, thou wilt make this stone flesh? Wilt not thou do what thou hast said?* O perform thy word unto thy Servant, wherein thou hast commanded me to put my trust!

And be importunate in this request of thine unto God, often renewing thy Prayers, and never give over till thou find thine hard heart brought into a mourning and melting frame. Though God for a while seemeth deaf to thy Prayers, yet be not thou dumb, many Petitions he cannot deny.

IV. *Resolve to give a present Bill of Divorce to all thy sinful Lusts and Pleasures, utterly to renounce and forsake thine old sinful Course of Life, and to set upon a New Course to serve God in holiness and righteousness all the remaining part of thy Life.* It's vain for thee to lament and bewail thy past sins, if thou wilt not give over thy sinning trade. For as the Apostle adviseth, thou must first put off the old Man with his corrupt Lusts, before thou put on the new Man. Thou therefore who hast accustomed thy self to swearing and cursing, to whoring and drinking, to scoffing and railing against the People of God, resolve to swear and curse no more, to whore and drink no more, to scoff and rail no more, but to cast them away with detestation, avoiding the places and occasions of these sins. For it is a vain thing to think thy self strong enough to abstain from any sin, when thou canst not withdraw thy self from the occasion thereof.

Ah, Sinner, if thou hast any regard to thy precious Soul, it will be thy wisdom speedily to resolve to leave thine own Course of Life, and to turn o-

ver a new Leaf. Think not of peace with God, whilst thou art at peace with Sin. Think not that thy old scores are crossed, whilst thou art so freely scoring up a new. Deceive not thy self, thy divorce from Sin, and thy marriage with Christ must be both on the same day. And count not thy self divorced, till thou and thy sins be parted. Resolve this day, to have done with thy old ways for ever. There is no true humiliation for sin, where there is not a resolution against it. Say not thou art humbled enough how little soever thy sorrow be, if thou art sincerely resolved against iniquity. And say not thou art humbled enough, how deep soever it hath been, if there follow not this resolution. Resolve for Christ, resolve against the Devil and all his works. That thy resolution may hold, observe these following Directions.

1. *Be sure thou do not ground thy resolutions on any confidence in thy own strength, but in the strength of Jesus Christ:* without whose assistance thou canst do nothing: but through Christs strengthening thee, thou wilt be enabled to do any thing. And know that the more sensible thou art of thy own weakness and insufficiency, the more ready Christ is to help thee and the more strength shalt thou receive from Christ. Which the Apostle Paul found true in his own experience, for saith he, *2 Cor 12. 10. When I am weak then am I strong*, that is, when I am weak, and insufficient in my self, in mine own apprehension, then I do most of all feel a gracious supply from Christ.

2. *Back thy resolutions with Prayer.* As thou dost resolve in the grace and strength of God to abandon thy Lusts, to forsake thy former wicked and ungodly Course of Life; so be earnest with God in Prayer for power and strength against the power and strength of sin. For as it is Gods power
by

by which alone thou canst keep down the power of thy Lusts; so Prayer is the means sanctified for the obtaining thereof. Oh therefore pray, and pray earnestly, yea, add fasting to thy prayers! For old sins to which thou hast been long accustomed, are like those Devils which possessed the Man from his Youth, which could not be cast out without fasting and prayer.

3. *Second thy prayers with thy diligence and faithful endeavours, striving against thy lust and corruptions, though never so sweet and dear unto thee.* For those are vain and insignificant resolutions which promise great matters, but do nothing. Whereas true resolutions are active and stirring, putting Men upon the Work. Hast thou resolved, through the Grace of God, to abandon thy Lusts, up then and be doing, set on it presently without any farther delay.

4. Frequently call to mind the Resolutions thou hast made of a speedy and thorough Reformation, which will be an especial means to keep them fresh in memory, and a fresh remembrance of them will stir thee up to a conscionable performance of them.

5. Often renew thy Resolution. It is not sufficient frequently to view thy Resolutions, but thou may'st likewise frequently renew them, for a Resolution renewed is as new made, and thereby becometh fresh and vigorous. And truly there is great power in a Resolution, when it is fresh upon the Heart.

V. Having resolved to give a Bill of Divorce to thy sinful Lusts and Pleasures, make choice of Christ for thy Lord and Husband, as well as for thy Priest and Saviour. Take him as the *Bride* doth her *Bridegroom* for better for worse, for richer and poorer with his Cross as well as with his Crown; resign and give up thy self unto Christ to be ruled and governed, ordered and disposed in all things by him: and resolve as to cast thy self at the Feet of Christ in subjection

to him; so to cast thy self into the Arms of Christ, and upon his Shoulders for Salvation from him.

Let the consideration of those many melting invitations of Jesus Christ unto poor Sinners to come unto him stir thee up to go unto him, to cast thy self into the merciful and meritorious Arms and Embracements of thy Crucified Saviour, to throw thy self upon his grace and mercy, as God hath laid thy help upon him, so do thou lay thy hope upon him, both for the Pardon of thy Sins past, and for power against sin for the time to come; for grace here, and glory hereafter. And if thou canst bring up thy heart to this, then is the match made between Christ and thy Soul; So that thou mayst with confidence say Christ is mine and, I am his.

And Oh what a joyful day will this be unto thee: In this consisteth thy new Birth, and work of Regeneration whereby thou art become a new Creature. This day is salvation come into thy Heart: All other things are but preparatives unto this.

Oh therefore let me prevail with thee, above all things to make this choice of Christ for thy Lord and Saviour: to resign up thy self unto him, and his Laws, as well as to expect salvation from him. For no Man can take Jesus Christ savingly, who takes him not wholly as his *Lord and Husband*, to serve and obey him; as well as his *Priest and Saviour* to free him from the guilt and punishment of all his sins. *He is the Author of eternal Salvation only to those who obey him.*

Al! Sinner, whosoever thou art, how many soever thy sins are, this day, in the Name of the great God, I do tender Jesus Christ unto thee. And as thou tenderest the Life and Happiness of thine own Soul, refuse him not, but stir up thy self to accept of him, both in his Person and in all his Offices. Say, the Lord Jesus Christ shall be my *Prophet,*

phet, I will, in all things, labour to be taught and instructed by him. And he shall be my *King*, I will give him the Supremacy. I will resign up my self wholly to his Dominion, in all things to be ordered and governed by him. And he shall be my *Priest*, he shall answer to God, and make an atonement for me: I will rest upon his perfect righteousness, and all sufficient Sacrifice offered upon the Cross for Life and Salvation.

Tho' thou hast hitherto been a great sinner, yet if now thou wilt abandon thy sins, and thus embrace Jesus Christ; thou shalt have him given to thee, and all thy sins freely forgiven thee. Oh why wilt thou neglect so great Salvation? O do not defer the doing of it one day longer! But to day, even now that Christ is freely offered unto thee, resolve to receive him.

VI. Ingage thy self by an expresse and solemn Covenant unto God, to abandon thy former sins, and sinful course of life; and to serve him in holiness and newness of life, all the remaining part of thy days.

There is a two-fold covenanting with God.

1. One is chiefly in and with the Heart, which consisteth in a sincere closing with God in Christ, and surrendring up our selves unto him, to be his faithful Servants.

2. The other is expressed by the Tongue and Writing, when a Man by words of Writing doth expresse his Covenant with God, ingaging himself, as to give a Bill of Divorce to his former Lusts, so to give up himself to God in Christ, to live in an Holy Conformity to his will.

Now it is this latter way of expresse and solemn Covenanting that I would commend unto you.

God in the Covenant he makes with us, proposeth expressly to be our God, and to take us for his
People

People, saying, *I will be your God, and you shall be my People.* Must it not then needs be our duty to make an expresse Covenant with God, promising to take him for our God, and to ingage our selves to be his faithful People? and certainly it cannot but be our duty to do that by our selves at Age, which we did by our Parents at our Baptism. For though then we were entred into the Covenant of God by our Parents, yet their *Consent and Dedication* will serve our turn no longer than till we come to age, and natural capacity to consent and Covenant for our selves. So that our first *Baptismal Dedication*, without our own *Actual Consent and Personal Dedication* of our selves to God in Christ, will avail us little. I grant indeed, that this explicite ingaging our selves to God, in expresse words or writing, is not absolutely necessary to Salvation. For if any Person close intirely & sincerely with God, his state is thereby safe, altho' he doth not thus expresse himself. But yet this expresse and personal Covenanting with God before-mentioned, may be of singular Use to a Christian to mind him of, and quicken him to duty, & establish him in the ways of God, and caule him to be more watchful, & strengthen him against temptation, and by all to raise to himself a Foundation of true and solid Peace and Comfort.

For your better *direction* therein, *I shall briefly shew you.*

1. *What is to be done before you make this Covenant.*
2. *How it ought to be performed.*
3. *What duties are required of you after the performance of it.*

1. For the first, what is to be done before you make this Covenant, *Study well the Terms & Conditions of your Covenant*, examine your own hearts, whether you find a willingness in your selves to re-
nounce

nounce and forsake your former sins, and sinful course of life, and to set upon a new course, to turn over a new Leaf, to be more conscionable in the discharge of the duties of your Places, Callings & Relations: Search your selves, whether you are willing to receive Christ in all his Offices, not only as your *Priest* to be saved by him, but likewise as your *Prophet*, to be taught and instructed by him: yea, as your *Lord and King* to be ruled and governed by him. Whether you can lay your selves at the feet of Christ, & be content to run all hazards with him to take up your Cross and deny your dearest Lust; and whatsoever stands in competition with him.

II. For the *Manner*, how this duty ought to be performed.

1. Be earnest with God in Prayer, that he would prepare your Hearts for such a solemn Business, by giving you suitable affections thereunto: and that he would graciously accept both your Person and your Service: and by his holy Spirit strengthen and assist you in the performance thereof.

2. You must *Covenant absolutely without any secret exception, or reservation*. Too many Christians herein exceedingly deceive their own Souls; they will promise to abandon the service of the Devil, the World, & the Flesh, & to resign up themselves to God & his service, but it must be with this *Proviso*, that they may be indulged in such a beloved Lust or to live in the Practice of such a profitable Sin, say with *Naaman therein the Lord be merciful to thy servant*, whereby they plainly discover the Hypocrisie of their Hearts.

3. It must be done with sincerity and uprightness of heart, that which the Beloved Disciple *Joh.* saith of Love, *1 Joh. 3. 18. Let us not love in word only and in tongue, but in deed and in truth*. The same may I say concerning this present work, *Let us not cove-*
nant

nant in words only with our tongue, but as in deed, so in truth, that is, sincerely from the heart, least otherwise we take the Name of God in vain. If a Man ought to be cordial in any thing, surely then in this solemn transaction with God, who is the Searcher of all Hearts, and knows not only the Thoughts and Imaginations of our Hearts, but also the Ends & Aims, the Intentions and Purposes of our Hearts in all our Actions.

4. *Make thy Covenant under the Condition of God's help and assistance, it being he only, who makes us able, as to will so to do, of his good pleasure, Phil. 2. 13.* And therefore make thy Covenant with confidence on the Assistance of God's Spirit to enable thee to keep it, suspecting thine own weakness. Peters purpose was questionless sincere, and his resolution good, but self Confidence was his fault, he presumed too much upon his own strength, which that he might the better discern, he was left to himself. Vow therefore & Covenant in the name of God, & thou wilt find ability to perform it.

V. *Write the Covenant with thine own hand, and then read it over and over again, that thou may'st truly understand the Matter and Terms thereof, & thereupon give thy unfeigned assent and consent thereunto.*

VI. Set upon the work with all possible seriousness, as being a business of the greatest Importance, upon which thy eternal Life and Salvation dependeth: and therefore set thy self as in the Presence of God, call up the most earnest of thy thoughts, rouse up all the Powers of thy Soul, and command them to the Work: and then upon thy knees make a thy Covenant with God, in these, or the like Words.

Blessed God! thou art the only, true, and living God who hast made all things, and Man in a more special manner for thy self: And when by his wilful transgressing thy Covenant, he had thrown himself into a State of Sin and Misery,

for attaining of Regeneration.

91

wherein no eye pitied him, then wast thou pleas'd to compassionate his case, and again to redeem him to thy self, by the precious Blood of thine only begotten Son, Jesus Christ. I am therefore thine O God, by more than a single Title : Thine, both as made, and redeemed by thee : and therefore ought to have given up my self intirely, to have loved and served thee, with all my Heart, and with all my Sould, and with all my Strength. But wretch that I am ! I have willingly suffered other Lords to have Dominion over me. How hath this present evil World, and the Things here below taken up and possessed my Soul ! How have the Lusts of the Flesh, and the Interests of this carnal life commanded all mine affections ! and how hath Satan taken me Captive at his will ! I have not resisted, but oft complied with his temptations.

But now, Lord, being by the good Spirit convinced of the evil and folly of my ways, I desire seriously, and from my Heart to acquit and abandon all the strange Lords to whom I have hitherto yielded my self in subjection, and return to thee. O Lord, as the only Fountain of being, and happiness. And as I am already thine by all manner of right and title, so also now to become intirely thine by my own actual choice, and consecration of my self unto thee.

I do therefore now, here in thy presence, solemnly, and in the simplicity of my Soul, renounce this vain and wicked World, with all the Lusts, and carnal Interests of the Flesh, the Devil, and all his works, which Jesus Christ came to destroy. And wholly and without reserve, I give up and dedicate my self unto thee, O God, Father, Son and Spirit in whose name I have been baptized. Thou, Lord, art my Creator, and I here engage my self to own thee as my only Sovereign, to live in all subjection to thee, and to be entirely at thy disposal, and to take thee for my only God and Portion.

I do here also accept of thy Son Jesus Christ, as my only Mediator, by whom I am to be saved. I now receive him in all his Office, and for all those ends and purposes for which the Father hath appointed him : not only as a Priest to satisfy and intercede for the Remission of my Sins ; but as the Shepherd and Bishop of Souls, the great Prophet, whom I am to hear in all things that he shall say unto me : and as my Lord and King to submit to his Laws and Government, that he alone may rule in my Heart and subdue my Lusts, and fulfil in me all the good Purposes of his Will.

And to thee, Holy Spirit, I here resign my self, and to thy only conduct, to sanctifie, guide, and comfort me ; not willingly any more to quench or resist any of thy sacred Motions.

To all this, I do here in thy presence, O God (who searchest the Heart ; and knowest what is in man) willingly subscribe, my Name, as a Witness against my self, if ever I prove false in my Covenant ; humbly begging the Aid and Assistance of thy Grace, that I may be steadfast and faithful therein, conscientiously doing, and performing it unto the end.

Lord

Lord, search me, and try my heart, and if there be any false way in me, discover it to me, that I may not be condemned with the Hypocrites; but the upright, and without guile, and in the great day be found blameless, and unreprouable in thy sight. Amen, Amen.

III. The Duties required of us after our solemn covenanting with God, are briefly these;

1. Having thus in truth and sincerity, with all possible reverence and seriousness made thy Covenant with God, set thy hand thereunto; and then lay it up safe amongst thy choicest things, that it may be a standing Memorial of thy solemn ingagement unto God, often looking thereunto.

2. Make conscience of performing thy Covenant. Having ingaged thy self to renounce and abandon thy former Lusts, and sinful Courses, stand not dallying with them, but speedily reject them with detestation. If wicked Companions have had too much of thy converse and intimacy, now break off society with them. If thou hast lived in the Omission of any known duty, as of Secret and Family-Prayer, of reading the Scripture, or the like now set upon the Practice of them, and be sure thou perform them in a serious and spiritual manner, serving God in Spirit and in Truth. Hereby wilt thou have a comfortable Evidence that thou hast in truth renounced the Devil, the World, and the sinful Desires of the Flesh; and hast devoted and given up thy self to be the Lords in sincerity. For then is the resignation of our selves unto God done in truth, when it doth ingage us presently to the performance of what we have vowed, & covenanted.

3. Oft call to mind thy solemn Covenant made to God, especially when thou art present at others Baptism, and at the Sacrament of the Lord's supper; frequent meditation thereof is a special means to keep it fresh in memory: and a fresh remembrance of it will put life into thy conscience, & stir thee up to a conscionable performance thereof.

4. When thou art tempted to any sin, bring that Sin to the Touch-stone of thy Covenant, and search whether it be not against it. This will be a special means to make thee oft to think of thy Covenant, and to be more careful in keeping it, and in resisting temptations against it.

IV. Another means on our part for the attaining of Regeneration, is, with patience to wait upon Christ in the use of his Ordinances, especially the Word and Prayer.

I. Frequent the Ministry of the Word, where the Spirit of God useth to breath. The Spirit is the principal Worker of this great Work, as our Saviour expresseth, *Joh. 3. 5, 6.* And the Ministry of the word is the ordinary means and instrument, which the Spirit of God useth for the effecting hereof. The Spirit of God breaths not in an Ale-house, or in a Tavern, or Play-house, but in the Ministry of the word. Whereupon the Apostle *Paul* calls it, *The Word of Life*, *Phil. 2. 16.* by which our Souls are quickned; And the Apostle *Peter*, the Seed of Regeneration, by which we are new born, *1 Pet. 1. 23.* Attend therefore unto the Ministry of the Word as the Ordinance of God, unto which his Blessing is promised; use it in obedience to his command, in hope of his Blessing, and with desire to profit thereby.

And for thine encouragement know, *That as dead a Soul as thine hath been quickened by the Spirit of God, as it hath been attending upon the Ministry of the word: as hard an heart as thine hath been softened; as prophane an heart hath been sanctified: as carnal and corrupt an heart hath been changed and renewed.* And who knoweth, but while thou art attending upon God in his way, his Spirit may breath upon thee, & so quicken thy dead heart, mollifie thine hard heart, sanctifie thy prophane heart, yea renew and change thy totally corrupted & carnal heart where in consisteth the work of regeneration. And

And when thou hearest, attend to it, as to a message sent from God, concerning thine everlasting salvation. And be often calling it to remembrance, whereby it will take the deeper *Impression* upon thine heart. And tho' for the present thou find not that benefit thou expectest, yet wait still upon the Ordinance. The *lame Man*, who lay long at the Pool of *Bethesda*, at last was cured.

2. Be much in reading the Word of God, & such practical Books as may help thee in the understanding & applying it. This must not thrust out Preaching, yet it is an excellent means of grace in its own time & place, as very many have found by their own experience. For as the Psalmist speaketh, *The Law of the Lord is perfect, converting the Soul*, Ps. 19. 7. *Luther* confesseth of himself, that he was changed & renewed upon the reading the Scriptures: and therefore profess'd he would not part with one leaf of the Bible for all the world. For in the Scriptures there is a clear Revelation of the way & means of Salvation by Jesus Christ, therein is contain'd the Covenant of Grace, and the Laws of Heaven according to which we must square all our actions.

3. Pray unto God for the Change of thine heart, beg of him that he would be pleased by his Spirit to regenerate thee, to plant his Image in thy Soul, that thou mayest become a new creature. What the Apostle *James* saith of Wisdom, *Jam. 5. 1.* is true of all grace, *If any one lack it, let him ask it of God, that giveth to all Men liberally, and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him.*

Oh! therefore beseech him to open thine eyes, and shew thee how sad & deplorable thy condition is, so long as thou continuest in the State of Unregeneracy, that thou mayest be truly sensible thereof: that he would shew thee the excellency & necessity of a New-birth, that thine heart may be raised up
in

for attaining of regeneration.

or

in some earnest longing desires after the same, that he would vouchsafe unto thee his *Holy Spirit*, which may quicken thy dead Soul and renew it after the *Image of God*, in righteousness & true holiness. And in thy Prayers plead the promise of God, *to give his Spirit to those who ask him.* That thy Prayer for a New-birth may the better speed.

1. Be earnest therein. Pray with all thine heart, & with all thy might with the highest intention of affection. If thou wouldst be a prevailing *Israel*, thou must be a wrestling *Jacob*; wrestle with God in Prayer, for it is the fervent Prayer only that is effectual.

2. Be unceasing in thy Prayers as one that will take no pay, nor give over till thou find the Work wrought in thy Soul. Be as importunate with God, as the Widow was with the unjust Judge. For God loveth importunity.

Obj. But some are apt to object and say, how can I pray without the Spirit?

A. Put thy self upon the Duty of Prayer, & who knoweth, but thou mayst soon feel and find the Assistance of Gods Spirit in the performance, though thou findest it not in the entrance of thy duty. Go therefore unto God in prayer, spread before him thy wretched, miserable state & condition, plead thy miserable necessity, the dreadfulness of thy present state, how much better it had been that thou hadst never been born, than not to be born again. And then waiting for the Assistance of the Spirit, be earnest and importunate with God, that he would not let thee live a day longer in this Unregenerate state, least death should find thee therein, & then thou perish everlastingly.

Obj. Some I know do question whether carnal & unregenerate Men may be put upon that duty of Prayer, because the Scripture saith, *Prov. 15. 8.* that the sacrifice of the Wicked is an abomination to the Lord, & that, *God heareth not sinners.*

A. 1. *The Scripture gives us warrant to press carnal & unregenerate Men upon the Duty of Prayer. For at the time when Peter told Simon Magus, that he was in the Gall of bitterness, and in the Bond of iniquity, then he pressed him to pray unto God, laying, Repent of thy wickedness, and pray unto God; if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee, Act. 8. 22.*

2. *We do not exhort Men to pray and still hold themselves resolved to continue in their wicked & ungodly courses, such Prayer indeed would be an abomination, but to resolve upon turning, and so to go unto the Lord for his grace to assist and accept them. And therefore, saith Peter to Simon magus, Repent of this thy wickedness, and so pray for pardon.*

And in thine own Prayers call in the Help of other Mens Prayers, beg of them that in their Prayers they would be mindful of thee, and of thy Condition; that they would be earnest with God on thy behalf that he would make thee a new Creature, by endowing thee with true, saving, sanctifying Graces. The Taylors Conversion is set down as the consequent of the Apostles Prayers. Not only their deliverance out of his Prison, but his deliverance out of the Devils Prison, is set down as a Fruit of their Prayers. To thine own Prayers therefore call in the Help of other Men's Prayers.

III. *When either in hearing, reading, praying, or at any other time thou feelest any Motions of Gods Spirit in thy Soul & Conscience, make much of them, surrender up thy self thereunto; presently turn these Motions into Resolutions, and those Resolutions into Endeavors. Let not the Motions of Gods Spirit be nipped in the Bud, but nourish and cherish them, that they may bring forth good fruit. Are the Motions tending to the working in thee a loathing & abhorring of thy former sinful Lusts? second those Motions with strong Resolutions to leave & forsake them for the time*

time to come, at least so to strive against them, as they may not rule and reign in thee, as formerly they have done. Are the Motions tending to the stirring thee up to any good duty omitted? O turn those Motions into Performances, and presently fall upon the Practice of those Duties, whether it be praying in thy Closet, or in thy Family, or such like.

Doth the Spirit of God beam any light from the Word into thine understanding, whereby thou art more thoroughly convinced of thy miserable Condition by nature, of the Excellency of the new-birth, of the necessity thereof unto Salvation? Labour to improve this light to the stirring up in thee an earnest, longing desire after the Work of Regeneration. Hath the Spirit of God in a Sermon so convinc'd thee, of some gross, scandalous sin or sins, that thou art pricked at the Heart, and deeply humbled under the sense and apprehension of them? Oh content not thy self with some sudden pangs of affection! but forthwith go into some secret place, & there ~~take~~ the advantage of thy present relenting frame of heart, for the more free and full confessing of thy sins unto him to be more watchful over thy self, as against thy former lewd and wicked courses, so against the occasions leading thereunto.

Ah Sinner! it will be thy wisdom carefully to observe, & diligently to improve all the Motions & Stirrings of Gods Spirit in thy Soul & Conscience, by seconding the work of his holy Spirit in thee. Lose not the Wind and Tide: the Wind may lie, the Tide may turn, & where art thou then? 'twill be hard rowing against Wind or Tide. Thou little thinkest what advantage such Motions wisely improved may be to thy Soul, & what prejudice the slighting & neglecting of them may be unto thee: for ought thou knowest, thine eternal happiness or misery may depend upon the improving or slighting the same.

IX. *Be much in the Company of the Godly, walk with them who walk with God.* He that walketh with the humble, shall be more humble, he that walketh with the Holy, shall learn Holiness. As there is no greater hinderance to the Work of Christ, than the Society of the Wicked; so there is no greater furtherance to it, then the Society of these that fear God, for there is none will be so ready to pity & compassionate you, to counsel and direct you in the way to Heaven, as these; none so ready to provoke and egg you on unto Godliness, to encourage and cheer you up when you do well, and to reprove you when you do amiss, as these; none so ready to communicate their experiences to you. *O come say they, and we will tell you what the Lord hath done for our Souls.* So that in the Company of the Godly there is much good to be got; they being like Lanthorns which disperse their light round about.

Oh Christians! encourage poor Sinners to come among you; let your discourses be practical Sermons, let your ways be living Copies of that holy Doctrine which you have received; let your Conversation be full of love, life, pity, compassion towards them, be ready to teach, counsel, encourage and help them on after the Lord. Teach not sinners to say (by the barrenness, unfavoriness of your lives) there is no more of God to be gotten in the Dwellings of the righteous, than in the Tents of wickedness.

Thus have I shewed you the means on your part to be performed for the furthering the new-birth, and the Work of Regeneration in your Souls. And now give me leave to propound one question to you, *Are you resolv'd with the Grace & Assistance of God, speedily to put your selves upon the practice of these directions, or no?* If you think these things more than necessary, and are ready to say, What need so much ado? as if without so much hearing, so much reading,

reading, so much praying, and the like, there were no hope of Regeneration and Salvation! you may then sit down and take your ease. But know for certain that without a conscionable use of these means, you are like to fall short, as of regeneration here, so of salvation hereafter. For where God hath appointed means, he doth not ordinarily work without them; and therefore if you will not use *God's means* no wonder if you go without his Grace.

I beseech you, for the sake of your precious Souls, do not wilfully refuse to be happy: do not wittingly plunge your Souls into everlasting Miseries. Be willing to be happy, awaken your sleepy, stir up your lazy hearts to be doing. Heaven is not gotten with a wish, everlasting Glory is worthy your utmost pains, and will not be gotten without it.

What say you, after all that hath been said? Are you willing to be converted? to become new Men, & to take up a new course? If you are not yet when will you? Are you content to die in your present state? If you were not breathing out your last, & just passing into another World, would you not wish you had hearkened to counsel? Though thou wilt live the life, yet art thou content to dye the death of the obstinate & hardn'd? be not Brutes & Madmen. If Christ be best at death; if holiness will be best at last? if you know & believe, that when you come to die, you shall wish you had made Christ sure: then sure your standing out against Christ now your refusing Grace now, is the first born of follies. O be wise! consider what's before you; *Christ & the World, Holiness & Sin: Life & Death*, choose now for your selves, & if you will be advised, let your this days *choice* be the same, which you are resolv'd shall be your *dying choice*. If you would not choose to die in your sins, to die Drunkards, to die Adulterers, to die Scoffers, to die Unbelievers, live not out this day in such a dreadful state

Several Objections of carnal and unregenerate Men, against the Use of the forementioned Means, Answered.

HAVING shewed the Means, I come now to Answer the Objections, which many carnal Men pretend against the Use of them, in order to a new birth.

Obj. 1. Some are ready to object and say, These are indeed likely means, but they find neither strength, nor ability, to set upon the Practice of them.

A. 1. I would ask thee, whether thou canst in truth say thou hast not been wanting to thy self in such things as were in thy power and strength? Hast thou not as much power to go into the House of God as into an Ale-house? to read the Holy Scriptures, as Play books and Pamphlers? to associate thy self with the Godly, as with the Wicked and Prophane? Canst not thou take up a Resolution, to abandon thine old sinful Lusts, and to set upon a new course of life? Certainly, if thou hast been wanting to thy self in these and such like things, this objection, taken from thine own inability, is but an idle excuse, and argues rather thine unwillingness, than disability; and know, that in the last and great day, thou wilt be damned, not so much for thy want of power, as for thy want of will.

7. If thou wilt but put thy self upon the Use of Means, thou dost not know what strength thou mayest receive from God, and what may be the issue thereof. While Peter was preaching, the Holy Ghost fell on all them that heard the Word, Acts 10. 44. And for ought thou knowest, whilst thou art attending upon the Ministry of the Word, or praying unto God, the Holy Ghost may fall on thee, and make that Ordinance effectual for thy Regeneration & Salvation. And therefore put thy self upon the Use of Means; wait

wait at the Pool; thou knowest not how soon the Spirit may come and move upon thy Soul. For God doth usually meet with those who seek him.

Obj. 1. I fear I am not elected, and therefore conceive it altogether fruitless for me to labour in the use of any means for this new birth. Oh! could I be assured of my Election, then should I with comfort and confidence labour after it.

A. 2. Election is a secret Thing, and belongeth unto God; according to that of *Moses*, *Secret things belongs unto the Lord our God, but things which are revealed belong unto us*, Deut. 29. 29. And therefore trouble not thy self with God's secret Will, but follow his revealed Will. Apply thy self seriously and cordially to the use of the Means God hath sanctified for thy Regeneration: and from thence thou mayest gain some comfortable Evidence of thine Election.

2. Consider, though it be the Duty of every Christian to give all diligence to make his Calling and Election sure; yet no Man can know, and be assured of his Election, till he be regenerated by the Spirit of God; therefore the not knowing thine Election should be so far from keeping thee off from applying thy self to the Means of Regeneration, as it should rather be an Argument to press thee thereunto: for by thy Regeneration thou mayest know thine Election. The eternal Degrees of God are only made known *a posteriori*, from their effects, one whereof is Regeneration: find this, and thou needest not doubt of thine Election.

3. Wilt thou not plow nor sow, because thou knowest not whether God hath determined thee an Harvest? Thou wilt say, I am sure I shall not reap, if I sow not; there's hope of a Harvest, if there be a Seed time: and therefore I will adventure to sow whatsoever the issue may be. And wilt not thou be as wise for thy Soul, as for thy

Objections against the Use

Body? Because thou art not sure of thine Election, wilt thou make thy damnation sure?

Obj. 3. Ah! I am too unworthy to partake of so great a mercy: there is nothing in me to move God to work grace in me, and therefore why should I trouble my self about it?

A. 1. Consider God's Grace is every way so free that the mercy which he vouchsafeth to any of his Creatures, is altogether of himself, and from himself. He respecteth his own goodness not our worthiness, in the Mercies which he conferreth; if none shall obtain grace but the worthy, who then can be saved?

2. Consider, that no Man before his Regeneration could ever find any worthiness in himself why he should partake of that Mercy. What was there in Manasseh? or in Zachary? or in Mary Magdalene? or in Paul before their Conversion? Surely none at all. Nay, there is never a Child of God on Earth; or in Heaven, but had as much personal unworthiness before his Regeneration as thou now hast. Why then doth the sight and apprehension of thine unworthiness put thee out of all hope of obtaining the same?

3. Consider, that the Sence of thine unworthiness is some degree of worthiness; yea, it is the greatest worthiness thou canst attain unto. And none ever found greater mercy from God, than they who have been most sensible of their unworthiness. Instance the Woman of Canaan, who acknowledged her self to be no better than a Dog, yet received this answer from Christ, *Oh Woman! great is thy faith, be it unto thee even as thou wilt*, Mat. 15. 27. So likewise the Publican, who was conscious to himself of so much unworthiness, that he stood afar off, and durst not lift up his eyes unto Heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, *God be merciful to me a Sinner*. Yet as the Text noteth, Luk. 18. 13. *He went away justified rather than the Pharisee*, who was puffed up with a sense of his own Righteousness.

Obj.

Obj. 4. Some object the number and the heinousness of their Sins. Oh they are such vile and wretched Sinners, that they cannot expect so great a Mercy from God, as of a Son of *Belial* to be made a Son of God, by the Work of Regeneration!

A. 1. Know for thy comfort that God hath embraced with Arms of his free grace, as great and heinous sinners as thy self, For hast thou been an Idolater, or Murtherer, so was *Manasseth*, yet was he received to mercy. Hast thou been a Blasphemer, or a Persecuter of the Saints and Servants of God? so was *Paul*, and yet he obtained mercy. Hast thou been a filthy, unclean Person, wallowing and delighting like a Sow, in the filth of Sin, and mire of sinful Filthiness? So did *Mary Magdalen* and many of the *Corinthians*, yet were they washed with the Blood of *Jesus Christ*, justified and sanctified, *1 Cor. 6. 11.* Hast thou been an Oppressor, and Extortioner, who hast got thine Estate by over-reaching thy Neighbours, and grinding the faces of the Poor? So did *Matthew & Zaccheus*, who yet found mercy. Why then is there not hope of mercy for thee? when grace hath embraced such great & heinous Sinners.

Q. Wilt thou say, thou art a greater Sinner than any of these forementioned?

A. This is scarce credible. But suppose thy Sin do exceed the proportion of any one thou canst find pardoned in Scripture; yet this were no just ground of despair: because the depth of God's Mercy was never yet fathom'd. God never acted his Mercy so far, but he is able to act it farther: greater Sinners than ever yet were pardoned, may be pardoned. And therefore tho thy Sins were more and greater than the Sins of others, yet there is hope of mercy for thee, unless by thine infidelity thou dost exclude thy self from the same.

Obj. 5. Others object, they fear their time and day

day of grace is past and gone, having long stood out, and rejected many offers of grace, and that it is now too late to seek after the Grace of God.

A. *To this I answer, that the slighting and rejecting the many offers of grace, is very sad, yea, an heinous Sin, which calls for the deepest sorrow and humiliation.* This made our Saviour to weep over Jerusalem, because they neglected the day of their visitation. But yet know,

1. Christ hath several Seasons of Conversion, and Regeneration; all come not in at the first hour of the day, nor at the sixth hour; Christ brings home some to himself in the latter end of their lives, who have all the former part slighted and rejected his gracious Invitations.

2. If thou art heartily sorry for thy former refusals, and dost now unfeignedly desire to close with Christ, I may with confidence say, thy day of Grace is not past. For those affections wrought in thee by the Spirit of God are gracious hints that he intends thee good, if yet thou wilt accept.

3. Thou who fearest thy day of grace is past, know this, that if thou now findest in thy self a willingness to abandon thy former Lusts and Corruptions, and to become a new Creature; to cast off the Devil's Service, and to become the Servant of the Lord Jesus, thy day of grace is not past.

I speak not these things to encourage any to defer, and put off their turning from their sins to a farther day, upon a presumption they shall have mercy at last; beware of that madness. Thou that wilt not to-day, thy Soul may be in Hell before to-morrow. But I speak this to incourage old Sinners to a speedy turning. Old Sinner it is the last time with thee for ought thou knowest, thou art just come to thy *Now or Never*. And two things I would speak to thee.

1. It's a great doubt, whether thou, who hast stood it out so long, wilt come in now, fear and tremble; few, very few of those that stand it out to the last hour, do come in at the last hour; yet,

2. If thou wilt, thou maist; if in this thy day, thy last day, thou wilt come in, thou shalt be saved.

Obj. 6. If once be regenerate, & become a new Creature, I shall never live one merry day more: then farewell all delights & pleasures; for the life of a godly Man is full of uncomfortableness, & sadness.

A. 1. True it is, every regenerate Man ought to renounce all sinful delights, to bid adieu to all unlawful pleasures; which in truth is no bondage, but rather a spiritual Liberty. The Bondage of a Christian is in being a Servant to his sinful Lusts; and Liberty in being delivered from them. The Apostle bewails the time when himself, and other Saints *were foolish, serving divers Lusts and Pleasures*, Tit. 3. 3. And reckons it among the prime Benefits they received by the Grace of the Gospel, to be delivered from that slavery and bondage.

2. Though every regenerate Man ought to renounce all sinful pleasures and delights, yet he may in some measure enjoy any lawful pleasures, which the Creature affords.

3. The Work of Regeneration is so far from depriving a Man of all delights and pleasures; that there are unspeakable delights peculiar to the Regenerate; they have dainties which their spirits feed upon, that the World knows not of; *A stranger doth not intermeddle with their joy*, Prov. 14. 1. As they have higher and more noble comforts: Their comforts are spiritual, administered unto their Souls by a special work of the Holy Ghost, who is designed by the Father and the Son to be the Comforter; to cheer and revive the Spirits of his Servants. And certainly the Comforts
and

and Delights which he conveys into the Souls of the Regenerate, must needs be soul-satisfying, and soul-ravishing Consolations. What Blasphemy it is to affirm, that the Joys of the World are better than the Joys of God!

Ah Sinners, what folly then hath bewitched you to think it greater pleasure to live in foolish sports, and fleshly delights than in the sense of God's love, and in the believing thoughts of Glory! did you but know the Peace, and the Comforts, the Pleasure, and the Joy which springeth from the Apprehension of God's Love, and walking in the ways of Holiness, you would soon be of another mind, & take another course than you do.

The new Birth is the very beginning of a Life of Peace and Comfort; and the greatest pleasantness is to be found in the ways of holiness. *Solomon* who had experience of all other pleasures, yet saith of the ways of Godliness, *Prov. 3. 17. Her ways are ways of pleasantness, even soul-satisfying pleasantness.*

Obj. But some are ready to object and say, how can the State of the Regenerate be so comfortable & joyful, when as none are more afflicted & persecuted than they; *In the World*, saith our Saviour, speaking to his Disciples, *John 16. 33. ye shall have tribulation.* And saith the Apostle, *All that will live Godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution;* which made *Luther* to say a Christian is a Crossbearer: *Qui non est Crucianus, non est Christianus, Luther in Gen. 29.*

A. 1. True it is, none are more afflicted & persecuted than they: but their afflictions & persecutions do not always deprive them of true spiritual joy & comfort: For saith the Apostle, *Rom. 5. 1, 3. Being justified by Faith, we have peace with God & we rejoyce in tribulation.* And saith our Saviour, *When Men shall revile you, persecute you, & say all manner*

manner of evil against you falsely for my sake, rejoyce and be exceeding glad, Mat. 5. 11, 12.

2. God's Children in and under great afflictions do oft times feel and find the greatest joy & comfort. As their sufferings abound, so their consolation aboundeth in and through Christ, 2 Cor. 1. 3. When doth a Christian stand in more need of the Comforts of God, & when doth he enjoy more of them, than when outward comforts do most fail him? When David was sorely distressed, being plunder'd of his Goods & robb'd of his Wives and Children, he encouraged himself in the Lord his God, and received much comfort from him, 1 Sam. 29. 6.

C H A P. XIV.

The Second Branch of the Use of Exhortation unto the Regenerate.

HAVING done with the first Branch of the Use of Exhortation unto the Unregenerate, come we now unto the second, which concerneth the Regenerate, and consisteth of divers Heads.

I. *Admire and adore Gods special mercy and goodness in thy Regeneration.* Let thine heart be ravished with the consideration of his love to thee in Christ Jesus, the bottom whereof cannot be fathom'd by any Angel in Heaven: And therefore well mayst thou cry out, *Oh the height, and depth, the length, and breadth of the Love of God unto thy Soul!* That the Lord should pluck thee as a Brand out of the Fire: that he should take thee into his special grace and favour, when he left many Millions of Men and Women to perish in their sins, that he should make thee an heir of Heaven, when he left so many to be Firebrands of Hell: that thy nature should be renewed & sanctified, when others are left in their filth and pollution, hast not thou unspeakable cause to sit down and admire the freeness of Gods Grace, and riches of

of his Mercy towards thee? Surely nothing but free grace hath put this honour upon thee, and put such a difference between thee and others. For what did God see more in thee than in others, to move him to set his special love on thee?

O cast thine eyes round about thee, look upon thy Neighbours who live under the same Ministry, partake of the same Ordinances as thou dost & yet never felt the power & sweetness of them in their Souls. Let the abominable wickedness which thou daily seest in others, fill thee with wonder at the loving kindness of the Lord to thee: Like the Dew of his free grace fall upon thy Soul, when the Hearts of so many about thee should be drie, not having one drop of that dew upon them; is not this a Mercy to be admired? Oh consider it, & adore it! and say, *Lord how is it that thou shouldst bestow thy grace on me, and deny it to so many, who in many respects are better than I?*

That thy heart may be more raised up in admiration of the Mercy and Goodness of God unto thee herein, take notice of the manifold Privileges which do follow and accompany such as are regenerated.

I. *The Love and Favour of God wherewith they are embraced.* Observe the Love of earthly Parents to their Children how great, how constant it is; withal consider how far God exceeds them in his love, even as far as he doth in greatness, which is infinitely. So as every regenerate Person may with assurance rest on the Love of God his Father, which cannot be but most sweet to the Soul, and exceeding comfortable. For in God's Fatherly Favour consisteth our happiness.

II. *Union with Christ.* For Christ is the Head, and by the Regeneration we are his Members.

This

This Union of the Regenerate with Christ, is one of the great Mysteries of our Christian Faith; and it is a Mystery of an unspeakable Comfort and Consolation: For by the Vertue of our Union with Christ, *God is our Father; Christ is our Brother, and our Husband and Head; Heaven is our Inheritance; Angels are our Attendants and Guardians, who are sent forth to minister for them, who shall be Heirs of Salvation.* These Angels are those *Horses and Chariots of Fire* which were round about *Elisba*; and which are also round about every Member of Christ in all their dangers, though they see them not. If the eyes of the Regenerate were but opened to see their glorious Attendants, how would their hearts be comforted and cheared in all their distresses!

III. *Adoption.* Such as are regenerated are thereby the *adopted Sons of God.* Oh that the Lord would open our Eyes to see this privilege! *Behold,* saith St. John, *what manner of love the Father hath bestowed on us, that we should (be called the Sons of God?)* 1 Joh. 3. 1. The Apostle not being able to express the greatness of God's love to us therein, he breaks forth into an admiration thereof: And truly well might he say, *Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed on us!* For here is not only love, but *love to admiration*, that we vile, wretched, sinful Creatures, who were *Children of wrath* as well as others, Eph. 2. 3. that we should be thus advanced in and by Christ, as to be accounted not only Servants, which is much, not only *Friends*, which is more: but also *Sons*, and consequently, *Heirs*, and *Cob heirs* with Christ, which is most of all.

IV. *Christian freedom.* As it is the great unhappiness of the *Unregenerate*, that they are in a state of *Vassalage*; so it is the greatest Happiness of the *Regenerate* that they are in a state of *Freedom*; being freed.

1. *From Satan.* Though not from the assaults and temptations of Satan, yet from *the power of Satan.* For our Saviour Christ by his death hath destroy'd him that had the Power of Death, that is the Devil. He hath now broken the Serpents head, so that tho' he may hiss against us yet he cannot sting us, tho' he may assault us, yet he cannot overcome us: & tho' he goeth about like a roaring Lyon, seeking whom he may devour, yet Christ hath him in a Chain & he cannot go one link thereof farther than he pleaseth.

2. *From Sin* Tho' the Regenerate be not freed from the *inbeing of sin*, which doth and will live in them so long as they live in the World: yet are they freed from the *guilt of sin*, and from the *power and dominion of Sin*.

1. *From the Guilt of Sin*, that is, from the wrath and punishment which is due to sin: so that none of our sins shall be able to condemn us. For Christ as our Surety, Saviour & Redeemer, did bear all our sins in his Body on the Tree, and there offered up his life as an all-sufficient Sacrifice, and full satisfaction to Gods Justice for the same. So that God being fully satisfied by the death of Christ for our sins, he will not, nay, he cannot in Justice require satisfaction again from us. Well therefore might the Apostle make this bold challenge; *Who shall lay any thing to the Charge of God's Elect; seeing Christ hath dyed, and by his death fully satisfied Gods Justice for their sins?* Rom. 8. 33, 34.

2. *From the Power and Dominion of Sin*; which cometh to pass by the Spirit of Christ conveyed to them, whereby their sins are in some measure mortified & subdued, so that they do not rule nor reign in them as formerly. In our unregenerate estate, sin had not only Possession of us, but Dominion over us, so that we did yield a willing subjection unto the command of sin. But since we are regenerated by the

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the Spirit of God, we are freed, though not from the in-being yet from the *dominion of sin*. So that tho' sin may tyrannize over us; yet shall it not reign in us; we shall not yield a free and willing obedience to the command thereof.

This is the great comfort of Gods Children, that tho' sin be not removed, yet it is subdued. Though they oftentimes feel the workings and stirrings of corruption in them, which make them to have many a sad heart and wet Eye, yet are they freed, through Christ, from the *dominion of sin*.

3. *The Regenerate are freed from the Law*: not only from the *Ceremonial*, and *Judicial Law*, which were peculiar to the *Jews*, and died with the decay of their *Common-wealth*; but likewise for the *Moral Law* (which concerns all Men, at all times, in all places) yet not as it is a *Rule of Obedience*, and *Christian walking*; for so it still remains in *Force*, even to the *Children of God*, even after their regeneration: But,

We are freed from the *Curse and Condemnation of the Law*; *Christ*, saith the *Apostle*, *Gal. 3. 13.* hath redeemed us from the *Curse of the Law*, being made a curse for us. So that although we do not perform it in that exact manner & measure which it requireth, yet our transgressions shall not be imputed to us to condemnation. The *Law* may condemn the *Actions*, but not the *Persons* of the *Regenerate*, it hath nothing to do with them: therefore the *Apostle* saith, *There is no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus*, *Rom. 8. 1.*

V. *Provision of all needful good things is another privilege of the regenerate*, who have a right to all good things through *Christ*, & the possession of all things God seeth good for them. It is observable, that when God was with *Israel* in the wilderness (where nothing was to be had) they lacked nothing, *Deut. 2. 7.*

It is naturally ingrafted into all Parents to provide for their Children; what then can they want, who have God for their Father? who as he is all-sufficient so a most loving Father to his Children; whose love far surpasseth the Love of Natural Parents to their Children. Art thou a Child of God by regeneration? Then look up to thy Heavenly Father for a supply of all good things. *For can they that are evil, know how to give good Gifts to their Children,* saith our Saviour. *And shall not your Heavenly Father give to you the things whereof ye have need? He feedeth the Fowls of the Air, and the Beasts of the Field, and he that is careful to provide for his Hawks, and his Hounds, will he suffer his Children to beg and starve, whom must one day be his Heirs? Be not then faithless, but believe and say not, What shall we eat? Or what shall we drink? Wherewithal shall we be clothed? For your Heavenly Father knoweth whereof ye have need, and will relieve you,* Mat. 6.

31, 32.

VI. Acceptance of their services, though full of weakneses, infirmities and imperfections. Natural Parents are not more ready to accept of the weak services performed by their Children, than God is to take in good part the imperfect services of his Children. How maimed and broken are our Prayers many times! yet coming from a broken Heart, they find acceptance with God. Though he regardeth not the glorious works of Hypocrites, yet he graciously accepteth of the weak services of his Children done in sincerity. When we cannot pray with that affection and fervency as we desire, yet if we set upon it with an honest and sincere Heart, doing it in obedience to the Command of God, with a desire to approve our selves unto him therein, and grieving for our failings, and imperfections, God will overlook our failings, & crown our weak Endeavours with acceptance. VII.

VII. *Protection from things hurtful*, is another privilege of the Regenerate. They are here subject to manifold casualties, and contingencies, from which the Lord in mercy protect them, keeping Watch & Ward for them: Yea, he is said to be a *Wall of Fire* round about his People, *Zech. 2. 5. A Wall* to defend them, and of *Fire* to consume those that rise up against them; So that they shall not be afraid of evil Tydings, for their Hearts are fixed, trusting in the Lord. I deny not but the Children of God may be wronged, oppressed, spoiled of all they have, and unjustly slain; yet in all these shall they not be hurt, for God will turn all to their good. Note what David said of Shimei's cursing him, *2 Sam. 16. 22. The Lord will look on my affliction, and requite good for his cursing this day.* On this ground the Hebrews took joyfully the spoiling of their Goods, *Heb. 10. 34.*

VIII. *Support under all afflictions*, is another privilege of the Regenerate. For God is present with them in all their affliction, supporting their weakness with his might and manifesting his greatest power in their greatest impotency; Yea, though sometimes he seems to leave them in their distress, yet he giveth such sufficient strength, as they are thereby enabled to bear it, and well to pass it through. This is evident by the Apostles holy Triumph in this case, *2 Cor. 4. 8, 9. We are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed.* The Ground hereof is the assistance which God affordeth us, and the strength which he communicateth to us.

IX. *All things shall work together for the good of the Regenerate.* And God will do them good by all in the latter End. *Deut. 8. 16.* He will turn their losses into gain, their cursings into blessings. Those afflictive Providences which seem to be most prejudicial unto them, will in the issue prove most beneficial. As

see in *Joseph*. The evil which his Brethren intended against him, turned to his good. Their selling him as slave to the *Ishmaelites*, proved the means of his advancement. To know that nothing shall hurt a Child of God, is ground of exceeding great comfort and consolation: But to be assured that all things even all cross providences shall work together for his good, is enough to fill the heart with joy. Oh then how great is the happiness of every Regenerate person! who may be assured that whatsoever befallcth him, shall be for his good, & doth work together for the best: certainly he may truly say, 'Soul, take thy spiritual ease, for here is much spiritual good treasured up for thee.

X. *A blessed death*. For so saith the Spirit; Rev. 14. 13. *Blessed are the dead which dye in the Lord*: that is, in the Faith of Christ. Who are blessed both because then they rest from their labours, from all their toil and pains, from all their griefs and sorrow; As also because their works do follow them through free grace in glorious rewards.

The Souls of the Regenerate, so soon as they are by death separated from the Body go immediately into Heaven, as is clear from the speech of our Saviour to the converted Thief on the Cross, *Luk. 23. 43*. *This day shalt thou be with me in Paradise*; which place the Apostle expoundeth to be the third Heaven. The word in the Original translated *σήμερον*, this day implies, that immediately after the breathing of his Soul out of his Body, his Soul shall go to Heaven. And thus it is with all the Regenerate, unto whom Death is like the Red Sea to the *Israelites*, even a passage and thorough-fair into the Heavenly Canaan.

XI. *A happy Resurrection*. For at the sound of the last Trumpet all the Regenerate shall arise out of their Graves like so many *Josephs* out of Prison.

Whatsoever

Whatsoever Imperfections were before in their Bodies (as blindnes, lameness, crookedness) shall then be done away: Tho' the Body was sown in corruption, yet it shall be raised in incorruption, not to be subject to any manner of Aches, Pains, Diseases or Imperfections: Though it were sown in weakness, it shall be raised in power; And tho it was sown in dishonour, it shall be raised in glory, 1 Cor. 15. 42. Here it is many times deformed, but then all deformities and defects shall be removed, & the Body made more glorious, through the admirable beauty thereof. Certainly if the Beauty of all the Men & Women in the World were concentred in one, it would be far short of the Beauty of the Saints in Heaven, whose Bodies shall shine more gloriously than the Sun in the Firmament.

XII. The last and highest priviledge of the Regenerate is, That they shall have an heavenly Inheritance. Fathers on Earth use to provide Inheritances for their Children: and the Apostle Peter blessed God, who hath begotten us to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in Heaven, 1 Pet. 1. There shall be a blessed Communion of all the Saints together, who shall enjoy the Society of Angels and fellowship with Christ himself; whose surpassing excellency they shall clearly behold, & partake of that glory where-with he is arrayed. What Tongue can expreis? what Heart can conceive the Excellency thereof?

Thus have I shewed you some of the glorious Priviledges of the Regenerate. O happy day, may that Man or Woman say as long as they live, when God by his Spirit Regenerated them, & made them new Creatures.

C H A P. XV.

An Exhortation to bless God, for the work of Regeneration, & to walk worthy thereof.

H. **A** Second branch of the use of Exhortation unto the Regenerate is, *To be thankful unto God for this great mercy.* Admire the grace of God, and bless his Name for ever. Art thou made alive? Is the Life of God begotten in thee? And hast thou evidence of it? O bless God whilst thou hast any Being! Let thine Heart and Mouth, and Life be filled with his praises: take up the Psalmist's words, *Psal. 103. 1, 2. Bless the Lord, O my Soul, and all that is within me bless his holy Name; Bless the Lord, O my Soul, and forget not all his Benefits.* Wilt thou be thankful unto God for thy *Natural Birth*? And wilt not thou be thankful to him for thy *Spiritual Birth*? Wilt thou bless him for that he hath made thee a *Reasonable Creature*? And wilt not thou bless him for making thee a *New Creature*? Is not Regeneration of all mercies the most necessary? And wilt not thou be thankful for that which is the *one thing necessary*? If the Children of Israel praised God for their deliverance from the *Aegyptian Bondage*, how much more cause hast thou to praise and magnifie the Name of God for thy deliverance from a greater than *Aegyptian Bondage*? It being a deliverance from *Satan*, the worst of all Tyrants; from Hell, of all Persons the most loathsome; yea, from *Sin, Death*, and the *Curse of the Law*.

The more to stir up thy self to this duty of thanksgiving for this mercy,

1. *Consider the speciality of God's love and goodness unto thee therein, in singling thee out from the multitudes that perish, & setting thee apart for life.* Hath he dealt by all as he hath dealt by thee? O how many millions of Men and Women hath he suffered to live and dye in their sins when thy Soul liveth! How many

many for Birth more Noble, for Policy more Wise, for Riches more wealthy, are let run in their sins, till they fall into Wrath, when thou art escaped? when thou considerest that he should pass by them, & set his special love upon thee, if this do not fill thee with love, and with praises, the very Stones may cry out against thee. The *Psalmist* speaketh of it as a great Mercy to a godly Man that in a time of Plague and Pestilence, *a thousand shall fall on his right-hand, and on his left, and yet it should not come nigh him.* But what is that to his mercy, that many thousands should fall into Hell on thy right-hand, and on thy left, and yet thou preserved?

2. Consider how sad thy condition was before thy regeneration being a Child of Wrath, a Bond slave of Satan, and an Heir to Hell. And then compare it with thy present state. Behold, of a Child of Wrath, thou art made a Son of God; of a Slave of Satan, thou art become Christs Freeman; of an Heir of Hell and Damnation, an Heir to Heaven and Salvation. And doth not this call for thankfulness?

3 Consider that this mercy is unspeakable greater than all other mercies in the World. This new-birth makes a Man an Honourable Person, of the Royal Seed, a King and Priest to God: This makes him a rich Man, the least degree of this grace is better than all the Wealth in the World: This is the true Riches, the durable Riches, a Treasure that faileth not, nor can it be valued. This makes him a joyful Man: there's joy in Heaven at thy Conversion, & a Foundation of everlasting Joy laid in thine own Soul: Thou mayst rejoyce, it's meet that thou make merry, for this thy Soul was dead, & is alive, was lost, & is found. *Theodosius* gave God greater thanks that he had made him a Member of the Church, than *Head of the Empire.* So blest God more for this mercy, that he hath made thee a member of Christ-

than if he had made thee an Heir of all the Earth.

What tho' God hath not abounded to thee in outward Honours and Estate? Yet if he hath abounded to thee in grace, this alone will be matter of Eternal Praises. *Luther* hath a notable Story which may be useful to this purpose; in the time of the *Council of Constance*, he tells us there were two Cardinals riding to the Council; & in their journey they saw a Shepherd in the Field weeping: One of them pitying him, could not but ask him, why he wept? at first he seemed loth to tell him: but being urged, he told him; that upon the beholding that Toad which was before him he considered, that he had never praised God as he ought for making him such an excellent Creature as a Man, that he had not made him such a deformed Creature as that Toad, upon hearing whereof, the Cardinal was much affected, considering how he had received greater mercies than this poor Man, & yet had not return'd unto God that praise which was due unto him. And will not this poor Man, rise up in judgment against many of us, yea, have not the best of us cause to be greatly humbled before the Lord, who do not so affectionately remember the grace of God in making us Christians, as that poor Shepherd did, in making him a Man? O Friend, prove thy self to be born again, and then go thy way rejoicing, leaping and praising God.

III. *Hath God by his Spirit Regenerated, and made thee his Child? then walk worthy of this special mercy & dignity.* This worthy walking is much pressed in Scripture, as *Col. 1. 19. Walk worthy of the Lord.* And *Eph. 4. 1. Walk worthy of the Vocation wherewith ye are called.* In these and other like places, the word *Worthy* importeth no matter of Merit or Condignity, but only a meer Meekness and Congruity, or Answerableness. The Greek Word *ἄξιος* translated *Worthy*

Worthy is in other places turned Meet, or as becometh; as *Rom. 16.2. Phil. 1.27.* And where *John Baptist* saith, Bring forth fruits Worthy of Repentance, our new Translation turns it, *meet for Repentance.* So that the meaning of the aforesaid duty is, *that ye carry your selves in some measure suitable and answerable to your new birth and high dignity.* To which agreeth that of the Apost. *Peter, 1 Pet. 2.9.* Ye are a Chosen Generation, a Peculiar People, that ye should shew forth the Praises of him, who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light. As the Regenerate are more excellent in their state & relation than the carnal & unregenerate: so ought they to be singular & exemplary of their Lives & Conversations.

This Christ requireth in every true Christian: For, saith he, speaking to his Disciples, *Mat. 5. 47.* What do ye more than others? As if he had said, you will approve your selves to be sincere Christians & the true Disciples of Jesus Christ, must be of a more holy and heavenly frame, of a higher strain than the rest of Men: 'You must be singular, and shine as lights in the midst of a sinful and crooked Generation, by living exemplary and convincing lives; that it may be said of you what God said of *Job,* 'There was none like him in all the Earth, as for wealth, so for Piety, he being by many degrees the highest for grace in his Age.

Hath God shined upon your Souls by his grace? 'Let your light so shine before Men, that they may see your good works, and glorifie your Father which is in Heaven, *Mat. 5. 16.*

The more to quicken you up to a singular & exemplary life, to a life above the rate of carnal and unregenerate Men:

I. Consider thy Birth; and noble Parentage. For being born of the Spirit, thou art thereby made partaker of the Divine Nature, and art become a

Child of God, a Member of Christ, and hast Blood Royal running in thy Veins. Thy life ought to be suitable to thy birth and breeding, aspiring after higher things than worldly Men do, or can do; & avoiding those base & filthy actions wherein carnal Men take their cheif delight; For know that thy sins go nearer the Heart of God, and provoke him more than the Sins of other Men. *Kαὶ οὐ τίσιν.* And thou my Son *Brutus*, &c. art thou one of them? said *Julius Caesar* to his Son, when he saw him to be amongst them that Murthered him? That went deeper to his Heart, than the Swords of all his Enemies did, or could. In like manner, the Sins of Gods Children are greater in his sight, and do more grieve him, than the sins of other men.

II. *Consider thy high and holy Calling.* Thou art called out of darkness into light: out of the Kingdom of Satan, into the Kingdom of the Lord Jesus. Shall there be no difference betwixt the Children of the Kingdom, and the Children of the wicked one? Betwixt Gods Servants, and the Devils Slaves? art thou one of the called of God? Oh how doth it concern thee to follow the Counsel of the Apostle to the *Ephesians*; namely, *to walk worthy of the Vocation wherewith thou art called*; that is, suitable to the dignity and purity of it.

I. *Thy calling is an high calling.* Phil. 3. 13. And therefore as Men called to high places, carry themselves answerable thereunto: In like manner, thou being called to be a Christian, it is thy duty (that thou mayst not disgrace thy holy Profession, and that worthy Name by which thou art called) to carry thy self becomingly, and suitably to it, by hating every sin, labouring daily in the mortifying every lust and corruption, keeping thy self unspotted of the World.

2. *Thy Calling is an holy Calling,* 2 Tim. 1. 9. the end

end therefore is holiness, *For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness.* 1 Thes. 4. 7. Now an *holy Calling* ought to be accompanied with an *holy Life & Conversation*; being called from darkness to light, from sinfulness to holiness, from the *Flesh* to the *Spirit*, from *Satan* to *God*; is it not most meet thou shouldst cast off the unfruitful Works of Darkness and walk as a *Child of Light*? That thou shouldst no more give thy *Members as Servants unto Sin*, but as *Servants unto Righteousness*? That thou shouldst no more fulfil the *Lusts of the Flesh*, but walk in the *Spirit* after the *Motions* thereof? This is to walk worthy of the *Vocation* whereunto thou art called.

III. Consider the many great and singular Priviledges God hath vouchsafed unto you. Being raised above the Condition of other Men, it becometh not you to act as the Men of the World, but to live above their rate, to be more holy & heavenly in your conversation, more zealous for God, more fervent in the performance of holy & religious Duties. The Lord expects greater matters, and other manner of service from you, than from other Men; for he hath done more for you, & bestowed more on you, than upon all the World besides. When you call to mind your Priviledges, reason thus with your selves; hath God made us partakers of such & such special mercies; and singular Priviledges? Oh then what manner of Persons ought we to be in all holy Conversation and godliness! How ought we to walk worthy of such singular priviledges, by singularity of Actions, doing some singular things for God who hath dealt so singularly Well for us! As God hath abounded to us in his choicest mercies, so he expects we should be abundant in singular duties.

Sheweth the singular good things, which the Regenerate ought to do above others.

I. *TO make Conscience of their Precious time, & to improve it to the best advantage.* Carnal Men make little or no Conscience of spending their time to any good Advantage. Oh the many golden hours, & days & weeks, & years, that thousands of them spend, who yet cannot give the least account wherein they have done any thing which tends to the Glory of God, the good of others, or the furthering their own Salvation! Their minds are so much set upon their carnal Lusts & Pleasures, that their chief care is, not so much how to improve their time, as how they may pass it away in mirth & jollity: that which when it is once gone, all the World will not buy it back, what a cheap thing is it accounted? But oh how doth it concern such whom God hath called, to prize the time which he is pleased to afford unto them, & to be careful in improving the same to some good advantage; yea, to gather up the Fragments of time, every inch of it, that nothing may be lost! We cannot well spare one spare hour. Oh make the best of thy day! To this end.

1. Consider that thy everlasting state depends upon thy well or ill spending of thy time. Many make light of their time, & thereupon play and sport it away: Yet there is no moment which thou dost mispend but for ought thou knowest, it may be the very time upon which thine eternal State doth depend. Oh what a madness must it needs be, for an hour or days pleasure, to hazard the loss of everlasting Happiness & to incur the danger of eternal Misery! And yet how few think of the passing away their time, or that any great matter depends thereupon!

2. Consider the preciousness of your time, which is of more worth than all the riches and treasures in the World?

World? for they cannot purchase one minute of time. Should the Lord be pleased to vouchsafe unto a damned Soul in Hell but one Weeks time to live again upon the Earth, for tryal, how he would improve the same to his Souls advantage, oh! how highly would he prize it! how carefully would he improve every moment thereof! how serious would he be in every holy duty, & in all the concerns of his Soul! how conscionable in spending of the Sabbath! how watchful would he be on that day over his thoughts, words & actions, should he hear Christ tendred in the Ministry of the Gospel as a Saviour to poor sinners, oh how readily would he close with the offer of Jesus Christ, how heartily would he embrace him should he be tempted by some carnal Friends to spend one day with them in mirth & jollity, how would he answer them! *Alas, the time on which my everlasting condition doth depend is very short: & must it not be egregious folly in me to trifle away part thereof? Shall I plunge my Soul into eternal Flames for a little Pleasure, & short delight? Oh, God forbid.* And hereby may you see how precious time is. Surely little reason have any to be sparing of their wealth, & so prodigal of their Time? when as all the Wealth in the World (as before is said) cannot purchase an hours time.

3. Consider how much precious time you have already lost; how many hours, and days, and weeks, and years you have trifled away, in vanity & pleasure, yea in sin and wickedness. Tho' in likelihood the greatest part of your time is past and gone, yet it is to be feared that little of your work is done: Is it not meet then now to begin to make conscience of your precious time, and to improve it better? The Time which you have already lost, can never be recalled. O let no more of it run out in vain! Oh think it too much, that you have spent so much

of it already to so little, or such evil purpose ! And now at length resolve to be thrifty, to be more watchful over your selves, and more provident for hereafter. You have but a little time to live, yet much may be done in that little. Throw not away that inch which remains after the many Years that are gone, and can no more be recalled.

4. *Consider the shortness of thy life ; it is but a moment to Eternity.* And is it not pity to lose any thing of that which is precious and short ?

5. *Consider as the shortness, so the uncertainty of thy Life* You know what was said to him who promiseth life to himself for many Years, *Thou Fool, this night thy Soul shall be taken from thee.* And it may be, thou mayest this next night receive the like Doom. And if thy time be ended, and thy work to be begun, oh how sad is thy case like to be !

6. *Consider as the shortness & uncertainty of thy time, so the greatness of the work to be performed therein :* thy Lusts must be mortified, thy Graces strengthened, thine Evidences for Heaven clear'd up, &c. Here is a great deal of Work to be done in a little time. Doth it not then concern thee speedily to bestir thy self, and not to lose a minute ?

7. *Consider the present time is only thine to improve ; Behold now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation,* 1 Cor. 6. 2. Oh then, why wilt thou trifle away the time which is properly thine, & promise to thy self great things in a time which is none of thine ? For even the next hour, yea, the next minute thou mayst be cut off by the stroke of death ; and then all opportunities of doing and receiving good are taken away.

C H A P. XVII.

Of Embracing every opportunity of doing and receiving Good

II. **A** Nother singular thing which the regenerate ought to do above others is, *To embrace every opportunity*

opportunity of doing & receiving good. By doing good I mean not only beneficence to the poor, but also a conscionable performance of all Christian Duties; whether they concern the Glory of God, the edification of our Brethren, or the Salvation of our Souls. *Whatsoever thy hand find to do, do it with thy might, saith the wise Man, Eccl. 9. 10.* That is, whatsoever opportunity of doing good is afforded unto thee do it vigorously and speedily, not deferring it, till it be too late. Mark his reason in the next words; *For there is no work in the Grave, whither thou art going.* As if he had said, in this life thou hast many opportunities of doing good, but in the Grave thou shalt have neither power, nor opportunities: when thy night cometh, there is an end of working; therefore while it is day, and while thou hast an opportunity, Up and be doing.

If thou art in the company of a godly experienced Christian thou hast then an opportunity of gaining much spiritual good & advantage to thine own Soul; as by observing his graces, so by propounding thy doubts & scruples unto him. O let not such an opportunity pass away without some spiritual improvement.

If thou art called to visit a dying Friend, or Neighbour, Oh what an opportunity hast thou put into thy hand to do his Soul good! by advising him to think of death, and to prepare for it, to make his peace with God, to cast himself and the burden of his sins upon Christ, to build the hope of his Salvation only upon that Rock the Lord Jesus Christ.

If in walking abroad, or travelling on the Road, thou fall into company, what Good mayst thou do by some savoury and spiritual discourse of God, or of Mans miserable Condition by Nature, or of the state of Redemption by Jesus Christ, or the like? Oh how much might thy care this way abound to

thy account! Remember the words of the Apostle, *Exhort one another daily, while it is called to day.*

If the Lord hath given thee a Family, and furnished thee with abilities for their instruction & edification; let not the Souls, that are with thee be lost through thy neglect. Thou hast daily opportunities to be sowing thy seed in their Souls, which may spring up to their eternal Life. And for thy Neighbours that live about thee, let them find thee a good Neighbour to them; and that they will best do, if thou endeavour to help them to be good Christians. C H A P. XVIII.

Of performing good Duties after a right manner.

III. **A** Nother singular duty incumbent upon the regenerate, is, *To be careful of the manner of performing good Duties*: Not only to be conscionable in the use of Ordinances, but likewise to work up their hearts to a conscionableness in the manner of doing them.

1. *For therein especially is our respect to God manifested*; as for the duties themselves, many respects may induce us to the outward performance of them as Obedience to Authority, desire of a good Name, hope of meriting thereby, or the like. But it is respect to God (who searcheth the Heart) that moveth Men to do the good duties they take in Hand, after a right manner, so as they may be pleasing and acceptable unto him.

2. *The most holy duties we take in hand, are clean perverted and depraved through our failing in the manner of performing them.* Yea, holy duties are thereby turned unto sin as the Prophet Isa. implieth, Isa. 66 3. *He that killeth an Oxe, for Sacrifice, is as if he slew a Man: He that Sacrificeth a Lamb, as if he cut off a Dogs Neck.* Tho' the Sacrifice of Oxen & Lambs were good & commanded by God himself, yet because they fail'd in the manner of performing them,

them, they were no more acceptable to God, than the killing of Men, or cutting of a Dog's Neck; which things were forbidden by the Law, and an abomination to the Lord.

3. *Failing in the manner of performance, makes God not only to reject our duties, but pronounce a woe and a curse against the performers of them. Cursed be he that doth the work of the Lord negligently, Jer. 48. 10. Though it be the work of the Lord, that work which the Lord appointeth to be done; yet notwithstanding if it be done negligently, not after a right manner, cursed is he that doth it.*

4. *It is the right manner of performing Duties, that obtaineth a blessing from God. It may be thou hast heard much, and prayed much, and fasted much, &c. yet hast found little good, or benefit thereby. Examine whether thou hast not been dead and dull, formal and perfunctory in them, doing them as if thou didst them not. If so, no marvel thou hast received so little good by them. As therefore thou wouldst be loath to pray in vain, or hear in vain, or fast in vain; as thou wouldst be loath to loose the things which thou hast wrought, see to it that thou be as careful of the manner, as of the matter of them; how thou dost them, as that thou dost them. Do what thou dost with *all thy Soul*, yea, and with *all thy might*, and then thou may'st expect a plentiful and gracious return.*

For the right manner of performing good Duties take these few directions.

I. Be sure you take Christ with you, both for *assistance* and *acceptance*.

1. *For assistance.* For without me, saith Christ, you can do nothing: That is, without Union with Christ, and Communion with him, you cannot perform any acceptable service unto God. Whensoever therefore you set upon any good duty, in the first place beg

beg strength and assistance from Christ, and rest and lean upon him for his help; go not to pray, or hear, but in the strength of the Lord.

-2. *Take Christ with you for acceptance both of your persons and services.* Christ is the beloved Son of God, with whom he is so well pleased, that likewise in him he is well pleased with all those that come to God by him, and look for neither Audience nor Acceptance, but upon his account alone.

Whensoever therefore you go unto God in Prayer, or in any other Ordinance, carry Christ with you in the Arms of your Faith. *Plutarch* in the Life of *Themistocles* reports, that it was the usual custom of some of the Heathens, namely the *Macedonians*, that when they would seek the favour of their King, they took *his Son* in their arms and so went unto him. And questionless it would be the wisdom of Christians, in seeking the face and favour of God; who is the King of Heaven and Earth, to take the holy Child Jesus with them, without whom they may not see his face.

II. *Stir up thy self, and all thy strength;* put forth thy self to the uttermost, strive to be lively, active and stirring in Spirit. Get the Spirit of Faith, and of Power, this will be Oyl to the Wheels, and Wind to the Sails, which set all a going: let this be wanting, and thy best services will be lifeless & dead services, in which the Lord takes no delight.

There is a threefold strength we should labour to put forth in all our holy duties.

1. Strength of Intention. 2. Strength of Affections. 3. Strength of Body.

1. We must intend our work, as it were for our lives, for so it is, whether it be the work of *Praying, Hearing, Meditating*, or the like. We must put forth the strength of our *Intention*, as well as of our *Attention*, not giving way either to drowsiness of Body

or

of distractions of Mind. But oh what light matters are apt to steal away our minds and thoughts in the performance of holy duties! if one of our Superiors were talking with us, he would expect that we should mind what he saith, and not turn aside to talk with every one that passeth by us. But when God is speaking to us in the Ministry of his Word, or we are speaking unto him by Prayer, how ordinarily do we turn aside to every vain thought & trifling business, which offereth it self to us! Intend God more earnestly, & this will fire your thoughts.

2. *Strength of Affection* is required in every good duty. *Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might*, saith the Wise Man, *Eccles. 9. 10.* This may especially be applied to the Duties of God's worship and service, that we do them vigorously, with all the strength of our affections: Which the Apostle requireth, where he bids us *be fervent in Spirit, serving the Lord*, Rom. 12. 11. The word in the Greek, *ἡρώδης*, notes an *ebullition*, or *boiling up* of our spirits to the height. There is nothing in the World more unbecoming the worship of God than Hatred of spirit, and coldness of affection, when a Man serves God as if he served him not. It was David's commendation, that *the Zeal of God's House did eat him up*, Psal. 69. 9. which expression sheweth the vehemency of his Zeal, & strength of his affections, as in reforming God's House, so in performing the Duties of his Worship and Service. For this Jacob was honoured, and called *Israel*, because he prayed with the strength of his Affections, and is therefore said to *wrestle with God in prayer*, whereby he prevailed; *Hos. 12. 3, 4.* As thou desirest to prevail with God in prayer, thou must with Jacob, *wrestle with him*, putting forth the strength of thine Affections, which will be a special means to keep away vain wandering thoughts. So long as Ho-

ney

ney is boiling hot, Flies will not venture on it. So if the Heart and Affections be boiling hot in prayer, vain thoughts are not apt to enter in.

3. *Strength of Body* must likewise be put forth in every good duty: For God must be worshipped, as with our *Spirits*, so with our *Bodies*. And blessed is the Strength which is put forth in the service of God. Carnal Men are apt to lay out the strength of their Bodies upon their Lusts; Why should not we be as ready to lay out the strength of our Bodies in the service of God? Then may we have occasion to bless God, and say, *Lord thou mightest have left me to have spent my strength in Sin; in the gratifying my carnal Lusts; but blessed be thy Name, who hast made me willing to spend, and be spent in the service of my God.*

III. *Labour to keep close to God in holy Duties.* It were well, if in the performance of holy Duties; we did keep close to the Duties themselves; few go so far. But it must be our care not only to keep close to the Duties, but likewise to keep close to God in the Duties. We must labour, not only to mind what we are about, but likewise have an eye upon God, and to hold communion with him therein. In the use of every Ordinance, let our main desire, care and endeavour be, to find God therein; and not to rest satisfied without meeting him, and conversing with him. Let us never go from God without God; never go from the Ordinance of God, without some special communion with God therein, without finding our hearts raised and affected in the duty, and revived and refreshed in his presence.

IV. In regard of our great inability, and insufficiency for the performance of any spiritual duty after a right manner. In the first place, let us beg of God, that by his Spirit he would enable us thereunto; for it is the Spirit of God only that can help

our infirmities; he can soften our hearts, quicken our dead hearts, &c. And in praying for the Assistance of the Spirit let us plead the promise of God, saying, *Lord, thou hast promised in thy word, that thy Spirit shall help the infirmities of thy Servants; Oh! make good that promise unto me; let me feel and find the sweet breathings and actings, the lively quicknings and enlargements of thy Spirit upon my heart, carrying me forth with much life and vigour in the duty I am now going about.* This pleading the promise of God puts a strong engagement upon him to perform what he hath said.

C H A P. XIX.

Of walking Circumspectly and Exactly.

IV. **A** Nother singular duty incumbent upon the Regenerate is, *To walk Circumspectly and Exactly*, according to that of the Apostle, *See that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise.* The word in the Original translated *circumspectly*, cometh of two words which signifie to go to the extremity of a thing. We must be willing to go to the utmost of every command. The same word is used by the Evangelist St. Matthew, when Herod charged the Wise men to search *most diligently and narrowly to make a close and a thorow search*, for the young Child Jesus. So that by this Phrase is intended great accurateness and exactness in our Christian conversation, which the Spirit of God accounteth the greatest point of wisdom; as appeareth by these following words, *not as Fools but as Wise Men.* It is no part of folly but a great point of wisdom to be circumspect in the whole course of our lives. I know the Men of the World count preciseness of life the greatest folly that may be, and therefore often call those *precise fools*, who endeavour to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world. But at last it will appear the greatest point of wisdom.

For

For the better clearing & pressing this duty, I shall shew you, wherein this exact walking doth consist.

1. *In walking by rule.* As the Carpenter when he would do his work exactly, doth all by rule; So must the Christian that would walk accurately, he must walk by the Word of God, which is the only adequate rule of Holiness: He must eat & drink, & buy, & sell, & work, & rest, & all by this rule. Therefore saith the Apostle, Gal. 6. 16. *As many as walk by this rule; peace be on them, and on the Israel of God.* Let our walking be never so specious & glorious, yet if it be not strait & according to the Rule of Scripture, as it will afford no true solid comfort at the last, so neither will it find acceptance with God. For as nothing is a Sin (how great a shew of evil soever it beareth) but that which swerveth from the direction of Gods word. So nothing is a good work (how great a shew of goodness soever it beareth) but only that which is according to the direction of his word. Therefore Moses giveth this in express charge to the Israelites, Deut. 5. 32. *Ye shall observe to do, as the Lord your God hath commanded you: ye shall not turn aside to the right hand, nor to the left.*

2. Our exact walking consisteth in having respect to the inward and spiritual part of the Law, as well as to the outward and external. In every Command of God, there is both an outward and external part, and also an inward and spiritual part. The former I may call the *Letter of the Law*, the latter the *Spirit of the Law*. This our Saviour excellently clears in his Sermon on the Mount, where reciting the sixth Commandment, he saith, *Thou shalt do no Murder*, there is the Letter of the Law, and then adds, by way of Explanation; *Mat. 5. 21, 22. But I say unto you, whosoever is angry with his Brother without a cause, shall be in danger of Judgment*: There is the Spirit of the Law. So afterward reciting the seventh Commandment,

mandment, saith, *thou shalt not commit Adultery*, there is the Letter of the Law. And then adds, *But I say unto you, that whosoever looks on a Woman to lust after her, hath committed Adultery with her already in his heart*, Mar. 5. 28. There is the Spirit of the Law, or the spiritual part thereof. The most diligent Observation of the Letter or external part of the Law without a care of the inward and spiritual part, is as a Body without a Soul, a dead thing, which is no way acceptable unto the living God. Hence our Saviour spent so many words to convince the *Pharisees*, who were many of them punctual in their outward observations, that they were yet horrible Hypocrites, violating the Law in their hearts, which they so boasted of, and pleaded for, with their mouths, being Murtherers in heart, Adulterers in heart, tho' they committed no such wickedness in the outward Man.

And hereby is the Hypocrisie of many professors of Christianity discovered, who reach no farther than the outside of Religion; whose Godliness is nothing but carnal service, & bodily exercise. Whereas the Law is *spiritual*, as the Apostle speaketh, *reaching to the very inward of the Soul*, Rom. 7. 14. And saith our Saviour, Joh. 4. 24. *God is a Spirit and will be worshipped inwardly with a Spirit, as well as outwardly with the Body*. Whosoever therefore walks exactly, contents not himself with the externals of Christianity; but labours to bring up his heart to the inwards thereof, striving to suppress evil thoughts, to mortifie unclean lusts, & all inordinate affections; to abhor & watch against secret Impurities, as well as open Impieties, This is to walk exactly & accurately indeed; for so the Word in the *Greek Anabā's* seemeth to import in its proper notion, viz. *A going from the bottom to the top of the Rule*.

3. Our exact walking consisteth in a careful avoiding

ding all occasions of evil, & temptations thereunto. Having by sad experience found such & such things to have been snares & occasions of sin unto us, it is our duty, and will be our wisdom, carefully to shun & eschew the same. Especially considering that by running into temptations, we tempt the Lord, & provoke him to give us over to our weakness and to the power of our corruptions; that so by our falls we may for the time to come be more wise & wary.

Every Man by nature is like dry Wood, which is apt to kindle so soon as fire is put to it. There needs not any Devils to tempt us. Dry Stubble will take fire without any Bellows to blow it. Let the least occasion that is be offered unto us, how easily doth it take, every spark will catch upon our tinder hearts. The first Sin that proved so fatal to Mankind came by temptation. The Devil prevailed with *Eve* to go and see the forbidden fruit, telling her that tho' she might not eat it, yet she might lawfully look on it, and that became the occasion of her fall: For from sight and view she proceeded to touch & taste to the taking in of that which proved the Bane both of her and hers?

By the like means how sadly doth the Devil prevail upon souls daily; what windows doth he make our eyes and ears to let in temptations first, & then iniquity; what snares doth he make of our voluptuous Tables? our vain and loose Companions? our gorgeous Apparel? our vain and wanton Fashions? even forming our hearts into the image of those Vanities and leading us out of all iniquity? As our Saviour therefore taught us to pray, *that we enter not into temptation?* so it will be our wisdom to see to it, that our practice be according to our prayers. What a Mockery is it, this hour to pray against temptations, and the next hour to be running into them? Pray against temptations, and watch against them.

them. Watch against all temptations, but especially such as are most taking with thee; and such as have a tendency to thy bosom and best beloved sins. For from them is most danger to be feared, they having most strength from our nature. The Devil knowing full well, which are our bosom and beloved sins, and most predominant Lusts, unto them especially, and with great success doth he apply his temptations.

4. Our exact walking consisteth in *abstaining from appearances of evil as well as from apparent and direct evil*, 1 Thes. 5. 22. As there are some things apparently evil, so there are other things in shew and appearance only evil. He who walks circumspectly & exactly will as carefully shun the one as the other. He will not adventure upon any thing that looks like sin, or that hath the least affinity with it. If the thing be doubtful whether it may or may not be done, he will do that which is most safe, & leave the other undone. Yea, tho' he know a thing to be lawful in it self, yet if it may prove a stumbling block in the way of another, and so be an occasion of sin unto him, he will carefully avoid the same.

Upon this account St. Paul resolv'd to avoid the eating of flesh, tho' he might lawfully do it: yet when it was like to be a Stumbling Block to his weak Brother, in regard it had an appearance of evil in it, he said, *If meat make my Brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the World standeth*, 1 Cor. 9. 13. Upon this ground likewise the Apostles and Elders in the first general Council at Jerusalem impos'd upon the Gentiles *abstinence from meat offered to Idols, from things strangled, and from blood*, Acts 15. 29. Not for that these meats were in themselves unclean & unlawful, but because they were apprehended to be so unto many of the Jews, who were kept off from Christ, because those Meats, in which they supposed to be such uncleanness, were ordinarily eaten by the Christians.

Hereupon

Hereupon it concerns us in all our actions to be satisfied, not only of the lawfulness but likewise of the expediency of them. For many things in themselves may be lawful, which yet in some respect may not be expedient, because they have some shew of evil in them, or are liable to some mis-construction, or may be occasions of sin unto our selves, or of scandal or offence to our weak Brother; or may strengthen and confirm wicked Men in their ungodly courses, and the like.

But here in this caution is to be observed, that all necessary duties commanded by God, ought to be performed by us, tho' our Brother be offended at them, and tho' to the World they have some appearance of evil. Christs Doctrins, Works and Conversations were an offence to many in his days, yet he went on therein, and pronounced them *blessed that were not offended in him*. We may not therefore shun profession of Holiness, & the practice of Godliness, because unto worldly Men it appeareth, but *brain-sick peevishness*, and an *irrational preciseness*: But being commanded by God in his Word, ought to be endeavoured after. I may not wound mine own Conscience to secure my Brothers.

5. Our exact walking consisteth in a moderate use of lawful things, that overmuch liberty which some Men have given to themselves in such things as are in their own nature lawful, hath proved great occasion of sin unto them. Our Saviour seemeth to blame the Men of the old World, that when the Flood came upon them, *they were eating & drinking, buying and selling, planting and building*, Luk. 17. 27, 28. Things no doubt in themselves lawful to be done: but by over using those lawful things, & setting their hearts upon them, they laid aside all care of heavenly things, and increased their pride and covetousness, neglecting the threatnings of a Flood, and so drown'd themselves in perdition. The

The Apostle therefore tells us, 1 Cor. 7. 29, 30, 31. *That they who marry must be as if they marry'd not; and they who buy as if they bought not; and they who use this world, as not abusing it.* There is a lawful using the Comforts of this life, and an unlawful, an abusing of them. We lawfully use them, when we enjoy them with moderation, and with subordination to spiritual Grace, and Heavenly Glory, when we use all we have for God: We abuse the Comforts of this life, when we use them too much even excessively, in respect of the measure, and inordinately, in respect of the manner; when letting out their hearts too much upon them, the things which should lead us to God, withdraw us from him.

To spend some time in honest recreations, for the refreshing our minds, & strengthening our Bodies, is lawful: But to waste too much of our precious time in sports & pastimes making a Vocation of our Recreation; or to give our hearts unto our pleasure, to use those delights for themselves, and not of God; or to use them more for gain, than refreshment, they are thereby turned unto sin.

In like manner, sometimes to feast with our Friends and Neighbours is lawful, but to be too frequent therein, or *intemperate feeding without fear*, as the Apostle Jude hath it, *Jude v. 12.* never tasting the sweetness of God in the Creature, nor having respect to that Communion which should be among Saints, is to abuse God's good Creature.

So to be diligent in the works of our Calling, is in it self both lawful and commendable: But when we shall be so diligent in our particular Calling that we neglect the Duties of our general Calling, as Christians: I mean, when we are so taken up with our worldly Business and Employments, that we can find no time for serving God either secretly or in our Chambers privately, with our Families;

is to make our lawful Calling sinful unto us: Much more when we mingle fraud and deceit with our dealings, and cannot be content with that gain that comes in by Righteousness, and honesty in all our ways; this is to turn our lawful Calling into a Mystery of iniquity.

The best of God's Children are apt to use the lawful things of the World unlawfully, and to abuse them by their excess therein. Did not our Saviour warn his Disciples that they should take heed of abusing, as their meat and drink unto surfeiting and drunkenness, so their Calling to Wordliness & Covetousness? *Take heed to your selves, least at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness, and cares of this life,* Luk 21. 34. Who would not have thought the Disciples of Christ far enough from these sins? Yet they must take heed to themselves therein. If the green-Tree may so easily take Fire; what then will the dry do?

Oh then how doth it concern us to set bounds to our selves in all lawful things! not to exceed either in our Recreations, or in our Vocations, or in our Eating, Drinking, and the like; but to observe the golden mean, the rather, because the Devil in nothing more prevaleth with God's People, than in their immoderate and inordinate usage of things lawful; knowing full well, that the godly will not easily be drawn to the committing of such things as carry wickedness in their foreheads. He therefore layeth his snares for them in the use of things lawful, as their meat and drink, their apparel & recreation, their trading and traffick, with the like; wherein his snares being not so visible, he oftentimes prevaleth with them. The Apostle declaring what a cruel, crafty, and malicious Adversary the Devil is, whom he setteth forth to be a *roaring Lyon, that walketh about seeking to devour.* 1

Pet. 5. 9 He thereupon adviseth us to be, as *sober in the use of things lawful and indifferent, so watchful over our selves, lest we be foiled therein*

For your better help herein, take these few Directions.

1. *In the free use of lawful things, be ever jealous of your selves, lest you abuse them to intemperance, & excess.* This hath been the folly of many, that presuming too much, as on their Christian Liberty, so upon their own strength have adventured upon such temptations, as have occasion'd their fearful falls.

2. *I labour to make a spiritual Improvement of all those Lawful Comforts which God hath afforded to you for delight.* And so whilst you refresh your Bodies, you will cherish your Souls. Thus in your eating and drinking, often meditate on Gods bounty in providing so plentifully for you, & not only take in Meats, but likewise give out gracious Discourses & Instructions. For what can it be but egregious folly, when you are feeding your Bodies, to neglect your Souls? In putting on your Cloaths, meditate on the Robe of Christs Righteousness, which alone can make you amiable in the sight of God, desiring with the Apostle *to be found clothed therewith at the great day.*

3. *Consider that to use your lawful comforts to the utmost extent is the next Door to Sin.* He who will go to the utmost extent of what he may lawfully do, is in danger to go beyond it, and to do also that which is unlawful. He who will walk upon the brink of a River, may fall into the Water: & he who will take the utmost liberty he may, is very near falling into sin. CHAP. XX.

of the danger of Covetousness, as being the root of all Evil.

V. **A** Nother singular Duty incumbent upon the Regenerate is to beware of Covetousness, and

And over loving the World as being the root of all Evil, I do not say, that our hearts being changed and renewed, we ought thereupon wholly to abandon the World, and give over all worldly busineses and Employments. For grace and a worldly calling may very well stand together; yea, a Man may be a sincere holy Christian, and yet a great Dealer in the World; nay grace ingageth a Man to be a good Husband, to improve the Estate of God bestowed on him; But yet we ought not insatiably to desire and inordinately to hunt after riches, as if they were the only things, or the great things, to be sought after; this is covetousness. It is not the having of Riches but the immoderate desiring and loving of them, and overvaluing of them, which denominates a Man Covetous. A Man may have much of this *world's* goods, & yet be no worldling; And another may have little and yet be covetous. This sin is especially in the heart;

Q. May not a godly Man desire Riches, seeing they are often in Scripture termed blessings, which God hath promised as a reward of his Service?

A. There is a moderate desire of Riches which is lawful; and an immoderate, or inordinate desire, which is unlawful. Then is our desire of Riches moderate when we desire no more than is needful, & can be content to want that, when God will have it so.

Q. What may be accounted needful?

Ans. 1. That which is meet for the state and calling wherein God hath set us.

2. That which is requisite for the Charge committed to us. As if a Man have a Wife, and Children, and Servants, or Kindred lying upon his Charge, what is needful and sufficient for them, may be desired and sought after.

3. That which is needful for the future livelihood and maintenance of Wife and Children may lawfully

lawfully be desired and sought after. The Apostle layeth it down as a Duty, 'that Parents ought to lay up for their Children, 2 Cor. 12. 14.

Besides this moderate desire of seeking after riches, there is an immoderate desiring, and inordinate seeking after them. As when a Man is not content with that portion which God by his Providence doth afford unto him, but insatiably thirsts after more: And rather than fail of his desire, will both neglect his God, and his Soul, and also venture on the use of any unlawful means, as lying, swearing, false weights & measures, with the like, for accomplishing the same; which is wickedness in any, but especially such as make a profession of religion.

Yet how many Professors are there in our days, who tho' they pretend much love to Christ, yet by their practice it appears, that their love of riches is greater and stronger than their love of him?

1. For how are their thoughts more upon the World, & the things thereof, than on Christ? No sooner are they awake from their sleep, but the World presently takes possession of their hearts; and their thoughts are upon their Estate, how they may increase the same, & that with unwearied care & labour: when every little that is done for Christ is a weariness to them. 2. How do their discourses run out more upon their riches, than on Christ, yea, with what freedom & delight do they talk of their Wealth & of the Means of getting and encreasing the same, and scarce a word of Christ all the day long. Which doth clearly discover the Covetousness which lieth in their Hearts, for *out of the abundance of the Heart the Mouth speaketh.* As the Door keeper said unto Peter, *thou art surely of Galilee, for thy speech betrayeth thee.* So whosoever shall make the World the whole Matter and Subject of

his Discourse, it may be truly said of him, he is a Citizen of the World, for his Speech betrayeth him.

3. How eager and keen are their desires after the Riches of this World? or at least after a further Portion and Provision for themselves, Wives and Children.

4. How do they toil and labour, spending their sweat & strength in seeking after Riches? thinking no care & study too much, nor pains too great, for encreasing their wealth and store. How do they rise earlier for their worldly business, than for their Prayers, or any spiritual Exercises?

5. How do they suffer the World to take up so much of their precious time, that they can scarce find any leisure either for closet-devotions, or Family Prayers? but make their Religion give place to their worldly businesses. And when at any time they fall upon Performance of holy duties, how are their hearts in that very time taken up with worldly Thoughts and Imaginations? So that instead of conversing with God in his holy Ordinances, & enjoying communion with him therein, they converse with the world, & hold communion with the Devil.

O what a shame is it for such as are brought out of darkness into marvellous light, having their understandings enlightened with the Knowledge of God, & of his Son Jesus Christ, and are able to discern the Mysteries of Godliness, that they should set their hearts & affections upon base & transitory things! that they should lay up themselves so much in pursuit of them, & never think they have laid up sufficient of these earthly treasures, what a shame is it for such as profess themselves the Sons of God, to live like Sons of Men, as if their portion and happiness were only in this life: That they who profess themselves Heirs to an heavenly Inheritance should so much dote upon earthly things? what a shame

shame is it for such as have reasonable Souls, capable of an everlasting life, & of communion with God both here and hereafter, should so far debase their natures, as live like Moles and Worms in the Earth, and to root like Swine in Mud and Dung!

Oh how it doth concern you, daily to humble your selves for this sin, and to loath and abhor it, & watch against it for the time to come: For as every evil is to be abhorred, so especially such as is disgraceful to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, & to the Religion which you profess. Let us all therefore, who have given our names unto Christ, labour to mortifie this sin in us. Let us use this World, & the things thereof as if we used them not: neither in our judgments esteeming, nor in our practice seeking, them, before spiritual grace & heavenly glory.

That we may be the better quickned up thereunto, let us oft consider the manifold mischiefs that do usually follow & accompany this sin of covetousness.

I. *It is the Root of all Evil,* 1 Tim. 6. 10. There is no evil which a covetous Man will forbear, his covetousness will put him upon the acting and committing all manner of sin that will serve his greedy design. It will make a Man turn the day of sacred Rest into a day of bodily labour: It will make him use a wicked Ballance, & deceitful Weights: *For this they are full of violence & lyes,* saith the Prophet *Micah*, Mic. 6. 11. 12. It oft times raiseth Wars, & sets the World together by the ears: It occasioneth the neglect both of our own & others Souls: It inticeth us into Hell for the sake of living plentiful on earth: It causeth Parents to neglect the Souls of their Children, and Children to wish the death of their Parents; It maketh People to hate their Ministers, and Ministers to neglect their People.

II. Covetousness alienates the Soul of Man from God, and that several ways; as,

I. From the thoughts of God ; For God is not in all his thoughts, *Psal. 10. 4.* When he awakes in the night, his mind is wholly taken up with worldly matters without a thought of God, or of any good thing. When he is following the works of his Calling, now he is wholly drowned and swallowed up therein !

2. *It alienates the Soul of Man from the Love of God. For if any man love the World, the love of the Father is not in him, 1 John 2. 15.*

3. It alienates the Soul of Man from attending upon God in his Ordinances, as you may see it in the invited Guests in the Parable ; whose eager desire after things of this World kept them from coming to the Wedding-Feast.

III. Covetousness makes a Man unthankful for his present state & condition, tho' in itself an Estate very full & comfortable. His mind is so much upon what he hath not, that he neither takes notice, nor tastes the sweetness of what he hath ; His full vessel, in his own apprehension is an empty Bottle. Finding no contentment in what he hath, he is full of murmuring & repining, that he hath not what he would have. Many a gracious poor Man, that hath little of this Worlds goods, hath oftentimes more satisfaction and contentment in his little, than he that hath the greatest Earthly Revenue, in all his abundance.

IV. Covetousness works the Hearer to a mean and low esteem of things spiritual & heavenly. From such as love the Word & the things thereof over much, Christ to be sure hath love little enough ; Their Eyes are so blinded, that they see not his Beauty ; and their Pallat is disrempared, that they taste not his sweetness ; And therefore, with *Esau*, prefer a Mess of Pottage before a Birth-right, & with the Men of *Shechem*, prefer the *oramble* before the

the *Vine*, the *Olive*, and the *Fig Tree*. Worldly Men prefer these poore empty things, the Brambles of the World before Jesus Christ the true & living Vine; yea, and above the Blessed Birth-right of God's New born Children.

Covetousness depriveth a Man of the Comfort of what he hath & possesseth; for the having of all is as nothing to him, that hath an immoderate desire after more. *Ahab's Crown and Kingdom* yielded him no comfort after he had set his heart upon poor *Naboth's Vineyard*. The want of this did more molest and vex him, than the enjoyment of his whole Kingdom did solace and comfort him. *For this he came heavy and displeased to his House, laid him down upon his Bed, turned away his face, and would eat no bread,* 1 King. 1. 24.

V. Covetousness exposeth Men to manifold temptations, making them ready to yield to Satans wicked Suggestions. They that will be rich, saith the Apostle, 1 Tim. 6. 9. fall into temptations, and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which draw men into perdition. As if he had said, they who set their hearts upon th-ir riches, whose hearts run after their covetousness are fit for any temptation, ready to yield to any of Satans wicked Suggestions, for the satisfying their Covetous humor, *Judas* (as *Tertull.* thinks) was pretty honest till he carried the Bag, and that gave him occasion to discover rottenness that was in his Heart.

C H A P. XXI.

Of living by Faith in Gods Promises

VI. **A** Nother singular Duty incumbent upon the Regenerate is, to live by Faith, casting themselves upon God in Christ, & upon his gracious Promises in all their streights and dangers, for such needful & useful things as they stand in need of. To live by Faith is not only to believe in Christ for

Salvation, but also firmly to rest and rely upon God, and his gracious Promises expressed in his words for support under all our Tryals, for succour in all our distresses, for assistance against all assaults, for deliverance out of all our dangers, and for supply of all our wants, whether temporal or spiritual.

Thus did those Ancient *Worthies* mentioned, *Heb.* 11. There we read, that into whatsoever trouble or streight they were brought, they so lived by Faith in Gods Promises, that nothing could dismay them, much less overthrow them. And if in like manner thou couldst but quietly rest upon God, & his gracious Promises, thou wouldst in thy greatest tryals and troubles be more than a Conqueror, as the Apostle speaketh.

When therefore thou art troubled for thy sins, groaning under the weight and burden of them, then throw thy self upon the merits & righteousness of Jesus Christ, and there let thy Soul rest it self in hope of the pardon of the sins here and of eternal life and salvation hereafter; venturing upon that comfortable Promise, *Come unto me all ye that are weary and heavy laden and I will give you rest*, Mat. 11. 28.

When thou art assaulted with the temptations of Satan, and fearest least thou shouldst be overcome by them, then look up unto God, trusting in him for deliverance in due time, and for support in the mean time, relying upon that gracious Promise. *God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that you are able, but will with the temptation make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it*, 1 Cor. 10.

13.

When thou art under any spiritual disersion, sitting in darkness without any spark of comfort, then look up unto God with the Eye of Faith for the light of his countenance; and the assurance of his loving
favour

favour resting & refreshing thy drooping Soul with that comfortable Promise. *In a little wrath have I hid my face from thee, but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee saith the Lord thy Redeemer,* Isa. 54. 8.

When thou apprehendest thy self weak and insufficient for the performance of duties, then look up unto God, who hath promised to help the weaknesses & infirmities of his Servants, and trust upon the power of Jesus Christ; then wilt thou be able to say with the Apostle, *I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me,* Phil. 4. 13.

When thou feelest thy corruptions strongly working and stirring in thee, then look up unto God, who is able, & hath promised to subdue thine iniquities, and to keep down the power of thy lusts, laying hold on that good word. *Sin shall not have dominion over you, for ye are not under the Law, but under Grace,* Rom. 6. 14.

When thou art reviled and persecuted by wicked & ungodly Men, then look up unto God with the Eye of Faith, trusting in him for help and strength; comforting thy self with that gracious saying of our Saviour. *Blessed are ye when Men shall revile you, & persecute you, & shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake: Rejoyce and be exceeding glad for great is your reward in Heaven,* Mat. 5. 11, 12.

When thou art streightned in these outward things; and thereupon art full of Worldly fears & cares, what to eat and what to drink, and what to provide for Wife & Children, then look unto God, & by Faith cast all thy care upon him, who careth for thee; resting upon that comfortable promise, Ps. 34. 10. *The young Lyons do lack and suffer hunger, but they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing, Tho' thou mayst not have that abundance and affluency which some others do enjoy, yet thou shalt*

not want that which God seeth good for thee, *who will supply all thy needs according to his riches*, Phil. 4. 19.

Thus in all thy streights & distresses thou mayst by the Sovereign Power of Faith working upon the gracious Promises of God, exceedingly revive and refresh thy troubled Spirit: For all the Promises of God set down in his word for thy comfort and support, being sealed with the Blood of Christ, are all *Yea* and *Amen*, as true as truth it self, and therefore assuredly in their due time be accomplished.

For thy better encouragement to this Christian Duty of *living by Faith*, seriously weigh these few things:

1. *The Properties of God*; more especially,

1. *His almighty Power*, whereby he is able to strengthen thee in all thy weaknesses, to support under all thy tryals & temptations; in a word, to perform whatsoever he hath promised. This made *Abraham* with strong confidence to rest upon the Promise of God, which the Apostle thus setteth forth, Rom. 4. 20, 21. *He staggered not at the Promise of God through unbelief. But was strong in faith; being fully persuaded, that what he had promised he was able to perform.* *Abraham* s eyeing the Power of God was it that made him so confidently to rest upon his promise.

2. *His truth and faithfulness in performing what he hath promised*. For saith the Apostle to the *Hebrews*, *Faithful is he that promiseth*, Heb. 10. 32. We read how under the Law of God commanded by *Moses* concerning him that voweth or promiseth any thing to the Lord, *that he shall not break his word, but shall do according to all that proceedeth out of his mouth*, Deut. 30. 2. And shall the Lord say, and not do it? shall he promise and not perform it? Surely it is as impossible for him not to be, as not to

to keep his word, and not to perform what he hath promised.

Indeed the Lord many times maketh his Children wait long for the accomplishment of his Promises; yet he never faileth to be as good as his word: which duly considered, cannot but strengthen our Faith in the firm expectation of all good things promised, and enable us quietly and contentedly to rest and repose our selves in God for the accomplishment of what he hath promised, and not to doubt thereof, though he seem long to defer the performance of them.

3. His infinite wisdom, whereby he dispenseth the good things contained in his Promises, in their fittest time & season, when as they shall make most for his own Glory, and his Childrens good. Far be it therefore from us to prescribe unto God the time and season for the performance of his Promises. But let us rather resolve with patience to wait his appointed time and season, who is infinite in wisdom, and so knowest what is best and convenient for us, even better than we our selves. Thus did the Church: *Our eyes wait on the Lord our God until he have mercy upon us,* Psal. 123. 4. Therefore as the Lord speaketh by the Prophet, *Isa. Isa. 28. 16 He that believeth shall not make haste,* because he is assured by Faith, that tho' he hath not the thing he desireth at his own time, yet he shall have it in that time which God in his wisdom knoweth to be best for him, when as it shall make most for his good.

II. Take notice of the particular Fruits of living by faith recorded in Scripture, some whereof are these:

1. Protections from things hurtful. Tho' *Daniel* was cast into a Den of Lyons, yet it is said, *that no manner of hurt was found in him,* Dan. 6. 23. And this reason is rendred thereof, *because he believed in Gods Word,* by Faith relying on his Power, whom he knew was able to deliver him.

2. *Provision of needful good things.* Therefore the Apostle, 2 Tim. 6. 17. exhorteth to *trust in the living God*, & that on this ground, *he giveth us richly, all things to enjoy*: namely all such things as he in his Wisdom seeth to be needful for us. And to set out Gods bounty in providing for such as live by Faith in his Promises, the *Wise Man* saith, Prov. 28. 25. *He that putteth his trust in the Lord shall be made fat*, that is, he shall not only have such a competency, as is absolutely necessary to preserve life, or to keep Body and Soul together: but also such plenty and abundance, as will make him fat, and well liking.

3. *Comfort in every Condition*, is another Fruit of living by Faith in Gods Promises. The promises of God in his Word are the Christians Cordials, to cheer up his fainting Spirits, when he is ready to sink. They are his *Aqua-vita*, to revive him when he is ready to sound. They are breasts of Consolation, full of sweet nourishment for the faint and weak, are sacred and sure Anchors, in the tempestuous seasons of trouble and affliction, to stay and fix believers amidst all tossings whatsoever. They are Roses that blow in the Winter, which with their fragrancy revive drooping and dejected Souls in the sad winter of their desertion, when the verdure of all other comforts wither, and drop like leaves that are bitten with the Frost. This *David* found in his own experience for, saith he, *thy promises are my comfort in my affliction*; for *thy word hath quickened me*, Psal. 119. 50.

4. Contentment in our present state and condition, is another Fruit of living by Faith. A Believer is like a *Die* that hath four squares, throw it which way you will, it falls upon a bottom. Let God cast a Believer into what condition he pleaseth, he still falleth upon his bottom of contentment, he will be contented with his present state, believing it to be ordered

ordered by God as in Wisdom, so in much Mercy and Goodness to him.

C H A P. XXII.

Of Heavenly mindedness.

VII. **A** *Not her singular duty incumbent upon the Regenerate, is to be spiritually minded by a frequent contemplation of spiritual & heavenly things. It is not some few flitting, transient thoughts of God or Heaven, wherein this duty consists: but thoughts resting and fixing on some spiritual subject. The Truth is, the thoughts of all Men fly up & down like Birds in the Air, or Chaff in the Wind; and some of these may light sometimes on God or Heaven: but they are soon off, and fixed on some worldly matter, or some impertinencies or other: & therefore cannot denominate a Man to be spiritual minded: which is another manner of business than many are aware of. It's a thinking with thought upon thought, a reiteration & multiplication of the thoughts of the mind upon God, and the things of God and this in order to the affecting the heart deeply with them.*

It is not sufficient to think and think oft of the love and goodness of God, but we must labour to get our hearts enflamed with a love unto him again: It is not sufficient to think & think often of Sin, & the misery it hath implunged us in; but we must so think thereof, as to work our hearts to a hatred of Sin, and a fear of that Wrath of God it hath exposed us, and made us liable to, and to a looking after Jesus Christ, who alone can free us from the guilt of our Sins, and from the punishment due unto us for the same.

This is a work of so great concernment & advantage, as none can truly apprehend, but such as have made tryal therein. *David* who was a Man full of Holy and Heavenly Affections, was full of Heavenly Meditation. And from the experience of that abund-

dant sweetness and comfort be found therein, doth often in his book of *Psalms* commend it unto others, and pronounceth that Man, *blessed who meditates in the Law of God, day and night*, Psal. **I. 2.**

Let thy Soul full often soar aloft upon the wings of divine contemplation. Let not any solitary season pass away without some spiritual meditation & conference with thy God. Either take a sorrowful survey of thy manifold Sins, which may draw from thee, as heartily grief for the same, so hearty ejaculations for the pardon and forgiveness of them. Or take a view of Gods blessings & favours towards thee; and let this enlarge and raise up thine heart in praises and thanksgiving unto him. Or batheth thyself in an admiring commemoration of the meritorious blood of the Immaculate Lamb, Christ Jesus, which was abundantly shed for the washing of thy Body and Soul from the filthy spots and stains of sin. Seriously think what he hath done and suffer'd for thee, how he hath fulfilled the Law and undergone the punishment due to thy Sins; and now in Heaven maketh intercession for thee, by presenting himself an all-sufficient sacrifice unto his Father for thy sin. O think with thy self, what thou must have suffered for thy sins, if he had not suffered for them. What thou hadst been if he had not redeemed thee, even a bond-slave of Satan & a firebrand of hell.

Especially, let thy Soul full often meditate on the glorious things which the Lord hath reserved in Heaven for such as here do sincerely serve him, & obey the Gospel of Jesus Christ. O think with thy self what a blessed thing it will be, to live in the vision & fruition of God himself: in whose presence there is fulness of joy, & at whose right-hand there are pleasures for evermore. As also what an happiness it will be to behold the glorious Body of Jesus Christ shining there with such incomprehensible beauty,

beauty, as shall infinitely delight the Eyes of the Beholders, and that to all Eternity, without satiety : for the longer the Saints behold Christ, the more they will be ravished with Joy and Delight. Ponder likewise as on the excellent qualities wherewith thy Soul and Body shall be adorned in Heaven, so on the excellency of that place, which is set forth in Scripture by Pearls and precious Stones.

And the more to set off this glory and blessedness, oft consider with thy self the deplorable state of the damned in Hell, who feel nothing for the present but wrath and vengeance : and can expect nothing for the future but the fuller vials of God's indignation to be poured on them to all eternity.

Such considerations as these will serve as notable helps to draw and keep thy heart Heaven-ward, & to turn all the streams of thy desires and longings towards the God of Glory. But oh, how many Christians are there, who having an hope towards God, and some confidence of their interest in things above, do notwithstanding converse but very little with them ? Their thoughts are seldom on Heaven or heavenly things ; that notwithstanding all their confidence, they may well question whether their treasure be there.

Consider Reader, as before the Lord, whether this be not thine own case. Thou canst not be ignorant that an heart estranged from Heaven, hath little evidence that he hath any part or place therein. And wilt thou yet perswade thy self that God is thine, when thou carest no more for him ? Dost thou highly prize an heavenly mind, and account them the best & happiest Christians, that are much in Heaven ? and yet is it not grievous to thee, to find that thou didst never in all thy life, it may be, or but very seldom, fix thy thoughts thereon for a quarter of an hour together ? but hast many & many

ny a time suffered the Devil to run away with thy thoughts, and to detain them on his dunghil below.

Certain it were better the Devil had power to run away with thine estate, than with thy thoughts, & to order their motions at his pleasure. Oh the multitude of worldly and covetous thoughts! of wanton and unclean thoughts! of proud and ambitious thoughts! of wicked and prophane thoughts! yea, of blasphemous and atheistical thoughts, that lodge in the hearts of most of us, and there revel it day and night! Oh the speculative filthiness and contemplative uncleannels, that not only harbours, but likewise finds hearty welcom and entertainment there!

Surely friend thou hadst best look to thy self, & get thy heart cleared of these evil guests, thy vile and vain thoughts: drive away these birds of prey, and then the thoughts of God will be more familiar and precious to thee. That thou mayest get up to this heavenly-mindedness, take these directions.

I. Humble thy self unfeignedly for thy great strangeness to God and Heaven, that thou hast so rarely set thine heart on things above. And for the time to come let special care and endeavour to habituate thy self to spiritual and heavenly Meditations, frequently to steep thy Soul in Heaven's delights.

2. When thou findest thy mind & thoughts to be ridden by the Devil: and carried away from God, lift up thine heart by earnest and fervent prayer unto him, who is the Father of his Spirits, and hath power over Devils; and beg of him, that as by his permission he hath suffered the unclean Spirit to enter into thee; so he would command him speedily to depart from thee, that thy mind may be free for its proper work. For he only can cast down imaginations, and every thing that exalteth it self against the Knowledge of God, and bring into Captivity every thought to the Obedience of Christ, 2 Cor. 10. 5. 3.

3. Work thy heart to a perfect Detestation of all vain and wicked Thoughts, that thou mayest be able to say with *David*, *I hate vain thoughts*, *Psal. 119. 113.* This will heighten thy resolutions to a greater watchfulness against them for the time to come, & to use thine utmost endeavour to drive them away, so that tho' they may arise in thy heart; yet they may not lodge there. And know this for thy comfort, that those vain & wicked thoughts, which thou dost from thy heart hate and detest, shall not be laid to thy charge, at the great day of account.

4. *Above all things keep a watch over thine heart*; according to that counsel of the wise Man, *Prov. 4. 23. Keep thine heart with all diligence.* As if he had said, above all keeping keep thy heart: which is like a City, liable, every moment both to outward assaults & inward commotions. Not only Satan thine Arch-Enemy is ever watchful for an opportunity to cast therein his fiery darts and sensual objects: but there are also many rebellious stirrings within, which spring from the foundation of original Corruption, over which thou must especially watch; and dismiss them with loathing and detestation. If vain and wanton thoughts be not stifled in the Conception, what monstrous wickedness may they not bring forth? How great a Fire may these little sparks kindle.

5. Wean thy heart and affections more & more from worldly cares & pleasures, which clog the Soul that it cannot mount aloft. As a Bird whose wings are limed, is not able to take her flight on high. So the Man whose heart is intangled with the Cares of this Life and the Pleasures of Sin, will not be able to get above ground. The Wings of holy Meditation will not raise it on high: Yea, such a carnal & earthly Mind, is altogether unfit for heavenly Meditation, & very backward & unwilling to it. What bet-

ter reason can be given why many think so little of God, His Word and Works, or of any good thing, but because their hearts are so full of the World, & their affections set so much upon the same? *Where there treasure is, there will their hearts also be.*

6. *Be often lifting up thine heart to Heaven, in some spiritual ejaculations, especially in the morning.* Such as find themselves subject to wind in their stomachs through emptiness, use before they go forth, to take a mornings draught. And as great need is there for such as are subject to vain, wanton, worldly thoughts, every morning to prepossess their hearts with the thoughts of God, of his glorious Majesty, his Omnipresence and Omniscience, his Purity, Justice and the like. And not only Mornings, but throughout the Day when ever thou findest vain or wicked thoughts to arise at any time within thee, meet them presently with a Prayer, lift up thine heart in some short ejaculatory request unto God, for power and strength to keep down and suppress the same.

7. *Labour to spiritualize every outward occurrence by raising heavenly Meditations from the same.* There is not any Creature thou beholdest, or any thing that befalls thee, but thou mayest make some other spiritual use & improvement thereof. As the Bee sucks Honey out of every Flower; so thou mayest extract spiritual and holy thoughts from every thing thou seest, and beholdest, yea, from all occurrences and emergencies; which will be a special means to prevent the Devil and Lust, and to keep out those vanities and wickednesses, which otherwise would fill thine head and heart withal.

8. *Labour to get thine heart furnished with the Knowledge of God and his Word,* which will take up thine heart with better things, & leave no room for these unclean Birds. As the emptiness of the
Stomach

Stomach maketh it subject to windiness; so it is the emptiness of our hearts that makes them so full of vain, foolish thoughts. A good Man, saith our Saviour, *out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth good things*, Mat. 12. 35. A good Man having his heart furnished with a treasure of many precious truths, bringeth forth good thoughts as well as good things. When thou art walking or riding alone call to mind some spiritual subject or savoury truth whereon to meditate: bring forth out of thy treasury, and let thy heart be continually working upon those good things, thou hast there laid up.

9. *So often as thou goest unto God in Prayer, let one Petition be for mortifying Grace*, to conquer those sinful Lusts, and vile affections, which are apt to stream up into thine head with answerable thoughts; and that he would make thee more heavenly minded, by working in thine heart better affections. Nothing but the Power of God can cure us of the Vanity of our Thoughts, and make them such as may be acceptable unto him.

In regard that the best of God's People do find great backwardness and outwardness in themselves to the performance of his heavenly Duty, I shall give you some Motives thereto, which if seriously weighed, may, through God's blessing, prove effectual to perswade you to be more spiritually minded.

I. May be taken from the Possibility of the Work. Indeed the Work is somewhat difficult, yet it is possible; its that you have power to do. Though you have not that command of your affections, you cannot love what you will, nor hate what you will; grieve when you will, yet can you not think on what you will? And by how much more able you are to do it, by so much the greater your sin is, if you neglect it.

II. Consider

II. Consider the Necessity of this Duty. The Mind of Man being active, if it be not exercised on spiritual & holy things, it will be on things earthly & carnal. The truth is whosoever doth not accustom himself to fix his Thoughts on God, or his Word or some spiritual Subject, will be sure to find them taken up with things of less concernment, yea of dangerous & sad consequence; from which they will reap nothing but corruption & defilement. By how much our minds stray from God, & pitch upon other things, the more will they grow in the Form of the Devil. *They have gone far from me, & have walked after vanity, and are become vain,* Jer. 2. 5.

III. Consider the manifold benefits which usually follow thereupon.

I. *God will be sure to mind them, who mind him.* Then they that feared the Lord speak often one to another, & a Book of Remembrance was written before him, for them that feared the Lord & thought on his Name, Mal. 3. 16. Not a thought of God but it is registered in his Book of Remembrance. The more we look up unto God the more will he look down upon us for our good: When thoughts of God are stirring in us God himself is not far off, he will come and enter. Oh how happy are those Souls in whom God comes and takes up his habitation.

2. A clearer apprehension of divine Truths. Tho we hear often, and read much, yet if we digest not those truths we meet with by meditation, we shall still continue in the Dark. Our Knowledge at the best will be but weak and inefficacious. Whereas by a frequent thinking of those truths which we hear or read, we shall have a clearer apprehension of them, and they will be concocted into better nourishment.

3. *An heavenly Conversation.* The Mind being the Fountain of Actions; such as the Mind is, such is the

the Life and Conversation. If the Mind be holy & heavenly, such will the Life be. But if the Life be carnal and unclean, the Conversation will be there-after. Wouldst thou have an heavenly Conversation? then must thou be heavenly indeed: Thoughts are the Seed and Conceptions of all our Actions, & such as the Seed is such will be the Fruit. As evil thoughts bring forth evil Actions, so heavenly Thoughts bring forth an Heavenly Conversation.

4. *Readiness to discourse on divine Mysteries.* As they who have laid up much Riches have sufficient by them, to bring forth on all occasions: so such as by frequent Meditations have treasured up many precious Truths, have sufficient by them to produce for the Benefit of those they converse withal. Whereas others who have spent much time in reading and hearing, and have not by meditation made it their own, we see how barren they are, *I will meditate* saith David *of all thy works, and talk of all thy doings*, Ps. 77. 12. It is there observable, how good Conference follows upon holy Meditation.

5. *Chearfulness of Spirit.* To be much in Heaven by a frequent contemplation of things above, will exceedingly cheer up our Spirits, & make us walk comfortably. For the Proof thereof I dare appeal to the experience of any Heavenly minded Christian. When is it that your hearts are most cheerful, but when you have been walking with God, & beholding his Face, and looking to those things that are within the Vail? Certainly this will leave such a Savour upon the Heart of a Christian, that he cannot but confess, that one hour thus spent, doth afford more true real joy and sweetness than all the Riches and Pleasures in the World.

6. *Another benefit of divine contemplation, is a profitable improvement of times.* For thereby all the Chincks and Crevices of our time will be filled up.
There

The Duties of the Regenerate.

There need be no vacuity, when we have work that is so proper for every season; yea, and that will whet and quicken us, to whatever other work God hath for us to do. The most contemplative Christians are the most active. Our holy Thoughts will set us upon our holy Work, the Thoughtless are usually the most Fruitless of Men.

7. *Victory over our Lusts and Corruptions, is another benefit of divine Contemplation.* It is recorded of Noah, that tho' he lived in wicked and corrupt Times, yet he was *a just and upright Man*, Gen. 6. 9. The Reason thereof is rendred in the next Words, *He walked with God*, continually eying him, and meditating on him. By his frequent conversing with God, he kept himself from the Iniquities of the Times, as well as from the Corruptions of his own heart. And certainly there is no better preservative against Sin, than to have our Mind and Thoughts thus holily imployed about spiritual Things. For,

1. By looking into our selves, and considering our own hearts and ways, we discern the Evils that are there: We see such Wordliness and Covetousness in our hearts, the very sight whereof will make us look the better to our selves.

2. By spiritual Meditations we come to have such an insight into the Evil of Sin, the Vanity of the Creature, the Folly of fleshly sensual Delights, that temptations will have the less power over us.

3. Divine Contemplation is a Preservative against Sin, because it keeps the heart imployed. When the Heart is taken up with better things, it hath no leisure to hearken to temptations? no leasure to be lustful and wanton, to be worldly or ambitious. When we are idle & empty of God, we are to be pestered with evil thoughts, whilst we are sure, well imployed, we are safe. When the Vessel is full,

you can put in no more. And when the Heart is fill'd with Heaven, there is no room for Earth & Vanity. What's the Reason most Mens Hearts are so full of wicked, wanton thoughts, but because God is not in all their thoughts.

4. Divine Contemplation is a good Preservative against Sin, in that our understandings are thereby cleared to judge rightly of our sinful Lusts & Pleasures. When a Christian hath been seriously musing either on those everlasting Joys which are prepar'd for the Godly in Heaven; or on those everlasting Torments, which are prepared for the Wicked in Hell, what then are his apprehension of his Lusts and Iniquities? Oh how doth he beset himself for them, when he sees what he is like to lose and suffer by them? how could he even tear his very flesh, and take revenge on himself, for his earthly mindedness & fleshly Pleasures! for his mispent time, that he hath so prodigally lavished, and wofully wasted his golden and precious time, in vanity & pleasure, in sin & wickedness! how verily doth he think there is no Man in *Bedlam* so truly mad, as they who for the short fruition of a momentary pleasure and delight here, do plunge themselves into everlasting burnings in hell, where is nothing but weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of Teeth.

C H A P. XXIII.

Of Mortification.

VIII. **A** Nother singular duty incumbent upon the Regenerate is, *To labour in the use of all good means for the Mortification of the whole Body of Sin with all it's Affections and Lusts, especially those we feel most predominate in us.* True Mortification extendeth it self to the whole of Sin, Body and Members, Root and Branch, even every sinful Lust. *Mortifie therefore your Members which are upon the Earth,* saith the Apostle, *Col. 3. 5.* Where by mem-
bers

bers on the Earth, are meant the sinful Lusts and Affections, which are as the Members of that monstrous body of Sin, which is evident by the particular Instance in the Words following, namely Fornication, Uncleanness, inordinate Affections, and the like. These must be mortified, that is, killed and destroyed. The Regenerate by the Spirit of God are enabled as to restraining the Actings of Sin, so by degrees to deaden the Root. Indeed this is not done to the uttermost while here we live, I mean, Sin is not here so mortified and destroyed, that it hath no residence, nor activity in our hearts, yet it may be so weakned and subdued, as to lose it's vigor, power, and strength, and languish away more and more. Tho' Corruption keep Possession in us, after we are regenerate, yet hath it not dominion over us: tho' we may be sins Captives, yet shall we not be sins Subjects to yield a voluntary Subjection of our selves unto the Commands of Sin.

Q. How may we know when corruptions is mortified in us.

A. When it is not only restrained, and kept from ordinary breakings out into actual Sins; but the Lusts and Motions that issue from it, are a grief to us; yea, we hate and detest them, and groan under the Burthen of them; we watch against them, fight against them, earnestly desiring to be delivered from them, crying out with the Apostle, *O wretched Man that I am, who shall deliver me from this Body of sin and corruption?* Rom. 7. 24.

For the more profitable pressing this so Necessary and Difficult a Duty; I shall,

1. Shew you some Motives and Arguments to enforce the same.

2. Some Means whereby it may be affected.

3. The Manner how it ought to be performed.

The Reasons forcing this work of Mortification upon the Regenerate are these, 1. After

1. After Regeneration there remaineth a Body of sin and corruption in the best, which if we endeavour not by the help of Gods Spirit, to mortifie & subdue, will gather strength, and become mighty, to the great hinderance of our Duty, and darkening all our Comfort.

2. Corruption doth not only remain in us as long as we live in this World, but it is always in continual Work; either stirring us up to evil, or keeping us from that which is good, or defiling our best actions. In which respect saith the Apost. *Gal. 5. 17. The flesh lusteth against the Spirit; And from his own experience he cryeth out, I see another Law in my Members, warring against the Law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the Law of Sin, which is in my Members; so that I cannot do the good which I would, but rather do the evil which I hate, Rom. 7. 23.* How doth it then concern us, daily and hourly to fight and strive against these Lusts which are continually working and warring in our Members, hindring and spoiling all our duties, breaking our peace, undermining all our hopes and comforts, and seeking our lives! We must either kill or be kill'd.

3. By a conscionable performance of this Duty we shall be freed from those heinous & scandalous Sins, unto which other Mens Lusts do carry them. Should corruption have its way & course without resistance in the best of us, it would soon break forth into the most loathsome & disgraceful sins, that are committed by the very worst of Men; as we see in *David, Solomon*, and others, is it not then needful for us to keep down, and withstand the very first Motions and Risings of Sin in our hearts, before it break forth into such wicked & disgraceful Acts, which will blast our credit and reputation, & bring a scandal upon our Religion and Profession?

4. Mortification of Sin was one special end of Christ's

Christ's death; who dyed to save his People from their Sins: not to save them in their sins, but from their sins: as from the guilt and their punishment, so from the Power of them. And indeed when Christ delivers from the Damnation of Sin, he first delivers also from the Dominion of Sin. Whom he intends to save from Hell, he first saveth them from iniquity: he saves their Soul by killing their Sins.

If thou findest any Lust to remain unmortified in thee, bearing rule in thine heart, and sway in thy life, thou hast just cause to question thy interest in Christ & his Salvation. *They that are Christs have crucified the flesh, with the Affections and Lusts, Gal. 5.*

24.

II. The Means whereby the Work of Mortification may be effected by us, are these,

I. When thou feelest corruption working in thee, and stirring thee up to evil, then call to mind, and lay to heart the ensuing Consideration.

1. Consider the shortness of the pleasure of sin, with the length of the Punishment following thereupon without true and unfeigned repentance. The one for a moment, the other everlasting. The Pleasure is but short, but the Punishment is for ever & ever. The torments of the damned in Hell are intensively most grievous in themselves: but that which mainly and infinitely adds to the greatness of them, is, because they are eternal, they are tormented day & night for ever and ever. Rev. 20. 10. The Worm is always gnawing, and the Fire continually burning, therefore are called *unquenchable fire*, Mat. 3. Oh what a folly must it then needs be, yea, and madness beyond admiration, for the short fruition of these perishing Pleasures, and transient Contentments here, to plunge our selves into everlasting burnings!

Oh

Oh how terrible is the thought of *eternity* in those tormenting flames! where the damned would think themselves happy, if after they had endur'd them so many thousand years, as there are Sands on the Sea-shore, or Stars in the Firmament, they might then be assured of enlargement. But when all that time is past, and innumerable Millions of Years and Ages are run out, they are as far from an end, as at their first entrance. Why wilt thou then purchase a little sensual delight at so dear a rate; for a moments pleasure to incur everlasting Woe and Misery? Oh the Fire of Hell, if thou wouldst send down thy thoughts thither, would burn up thy lusts, which otherwise will be fuel to burn thy Soul.

2. Consider the extream folly in gratifying thy sinful Lusts: thereby thou hast chosen and preferred thy fleshly Pleasure, thy carnal content before the glory of God, the everlasting joys of Heaven, & the precious Blood of Jesus Christ. Oh monstrous madness and unconceivable folly, at which the Angels blush, and Heaven and Earth cannot but stand amazed!

3. Call to mind and consider some of the threatnings in Gods word, as against sin in general, so against that particular Lust, which thou findest most working and stirring in thee, and unto which thou findest strongest inclinations in thyself.

First, to call to mind and consider some of the threatnings against sin and sinners in general. Upon the wicked saith the Psalmist, Psal. 11. 6. *God shall rain Fire and Brimstone and an horrible tempest, this shall be the Portion of their Cup.* And saith the Apost. *Indignation and Wrath, tribulation and anguish upon every Soul of Man that doth evil,* Rom. 2. 8, 9.

Secondly, When thou findest any inclination in thy self to a particular Sin as unto drunkenness, seriously consider that of the wise Man, who hath woe

who hath sorrow? who hath Contention, &c. they that tarry long at the Wine, they that go to seek mixt wine, Prov. 23. 29. When thou findest any inclination or temptation unto uncleanness, seriously weigh that of the Apostle, *Be not deceived neither Fornicators, nor Idolaters, nor Adulterers, nor Effeminate, shall inherit the Kingdom of God*, 1 Cor. 6. 9. And again, *Whoremongers and Adulterers God will judge*, Heb. 13. 4. When thou findest any inclinations unto covetousness, call to mind that of the Prophet, *Isaiah, wo unto them that joy in House to House and lay Field to Field, till there be no place*, Isa. 5. 8. And that of the Apostle, *The love of Money is the Root of all Evil, which while some have coveted after, they have erred from the Faith, & pierced themselves thorow with many sorrows*, 1 Tim. 6. 10. As God hath in his Word so denounced severe threatnings against many sins, so a serious Consideration of them will be a special means to mortifie the same, and keep them, at least, from reigning in us.

4. *When thou feelest corruption working and stirring in thee, enticing thee to Sin seriously consider the manifold sufferings & bitter Death of our Blessed Saviour Jesus on the Cross, whereof our sins were the cause. These were they that lay heavy upon his Soul & made him exceeding sorrowful even to the death. These were the Thorns that pricked his Temple, the Whips which scourged his innocent Body, and the Nails which fastened his Hands and Feet to the Cross. And can we love our sins which killed our Saviour? We complain of Judas and of the Jews for crucifying him, and seem to hate them upon that account: But, behold the Judas in thy Heart, & in thy Life, thy sins, these are the Betrayers and Murderers.*

Oh never leave looking up to a crucified Christ, till thou feel & find both arguments enough to engage

gage thy Heart against them, and vertue flow from him to the crucifying of them ! to this end reason thus with thy self, hath Christ paid for my redemption his most precious Blood, & shall I sell my Soul to sin again for this fleshly pleasure, or base profit? What is this but to crucifie the Lord of Life afresh? For now assuredly, so many sins as thou committest wittingly and with delight, so many Thorns dost thou again fasten upon his Head ; so many Nails dost thou drive into his Hands and Feet ; so many Spears dost thou thrust into his Heart. Certainly a serious consideration of these things cannot but be a special means to set thee heartily upon this work of Mortification.

5. *Consider how frail and Mortal thou art, subject to death every moment ; and woe be unto thee if thou dye before thy sins be slain. How darest thou adventure upon thy Lusts & the Pleasures of Sin when as thou mayst suddenly be taken out of the Land of the Living and cast into Hell, while thou art acting thy wickedness? even then when thou art blessing thy self in thy pleasures, or the gains of unrighteousness, thou mayst hear that voice rhon Fool, this night shall thy Soul be taken from thee. Didst thou but seriously consider, as the certainty of thy death, so the uncertainty of the time thereof, thou wouldest not but be afraid of sinning once more, lest God should strike thee dead in the very act, and thou have no time left for repentance. Oh pray with the Psalmist, That God would teach thee to number thy days, and this will make thee apply thy heart unto wisdom.*

6. *Consider that Sin will be thy destruction, and nothing besides it can harm thee. It is not in the Power of all the Men and Devils in the World to destroy the Soul of any Man. Temptations can do nothing but by advantage of Corruption : 'Tis that woundg*

Mortally our immortal Spirit, and brings it into that curled state, where tho' it never dyeth, yet it is always dying; tho' never quite dead, yet ever in the pangs of death.

Oh what prodigious cruelty must it then needs be, for such things of nought, to betray thy precious Soul to an eternal loss: when as if thou wouldst be perswaded to secure this enemy, sin, thou mightest live and be blessed, in spite of Men and Devils. And wilt thou yet be in league with it? wilt thou let it live? Shall not thy Soul be avenged of such an enemy as this? Arise, arise, set upon thy Sins, upon them all; let not thy Soul spare any one of them, give no quarter to them; let not any iniquity lodge in peace with thee one night more, lest thou be a dead Man before the Morning.

Thus have I commended to thee several considerations to restrain thee from sin; which by the help of God may serve to imbitter the sweetest Bait that draws thee to it, and to cool the heat of the most various enticements. When therefore thou feelest corruption working and stirring in thee, call to mind the forementioned considerations, fix thy thoughts on them; let them not go off until they begin to have a powerful influence upon thy Soul.

II. Another means on our part to be perform'd for the mortifying our sinful Lusts is, *carefully to eschew all occasions of Sin, and temptations thereunto.* He who will dally with occasions of Sin, is in danger of falling. He who will venture upon Temptations unto wickedness, is not far from commission of it. Observe therefore what occasions and opportunities, what means and company have at any time given advantage to thy Lust to exert & put forth it self, and flie from them as from Hell. This is a point of true spiritual wisdom, to see Sin
afar

afar off in the occasions of it; and by eschewing the one to prevent the other.

III. *Observe the first working of corruption in thine Heart and carefully suppress the same, not suffering it to get the least ground. Do not say, thus far it shall go and no farther. Give sin an inch and it will soon take an ell, as the Proverb is, Lustful thoughts have oft-times ended in outward uncleanness, & actual Adultery. From the Heart saith our Saviour, Mat. 15. 19. proceed evil thoughts, Adulteries, Fornication, &c. Noting evil thoughts to be the cause of uncleanness in the life. In Athalia's Massacre of the Bloody Royal young Josiah was hid in the bed-chamber; there he was nursed, and afterwards came to be King and Ruled in the Throne. Save any lustful thought, nurse it in the bed-chamber of thy heart, hide it there, and it will in time come to be King, and rule over thee.*

So soon therefore as any lustful or exorbitant thoughts begin to arise in thine Heart, speedily reject the same, quench the fire in the Thatch, crush the Cockatrice in the Eggs: stifle the first conception of sin. Certainly as it is a dangerous neglect not to observe and embrace the first Motion of God's Spirit in us: so likewise not to take notice of the first thoughts and rising of Sin in our Hearts. He who slights sinful thoughts, is in a fair way to sinful actions. *They that are Christs*, saith the Apostle, Gal. 5. 24. *both Crucified the Flesh with the Affections and Lusts.* The very Affections & Lusts of the Flesh must be Crucified, if we would prevent the Works of the Flesh.

IV. *Stir up in thy self an earnest desire to have thy lusts mortified and subdued.* The Reason why no more is done against sin is, because we are too well contented to let it alone: when nothing but the death of sin will satisfy thee; thou wilt then use

thy weapons, when once thou desirest in earnest the destruction of thine iniquities, there's hope they will not be long liv'd. For God hath promised to satisfie the desire of those that fear him, he will hear their groanings and deliver them.

Come unto me, saith Christ, al ye who labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you ease and rest. Certainly one special reason why many complain so much of the strength and prevalency of their corruptions is, because they are not heartily willing to have them mortified and subdued. They will indeed profess a willingness to part with their sins, that they may be freed from the guilt of them, and punishment due unto them; But unwilling they are to part with the pleasure they find in them. Thus *Austin* acknowledgeth of himself; *I prayed, saith he, that my sins might be forgiven and mortified; but yet I was afraid lest my prayer should be heard and answered, if therefore thou wouldst have thy sins mortified indeed, stir up in thy self a willing mind thereunto.*

V. *Complain unto God of the prevalency of thy lusts, and by prayer beg strength from him against the power of them.* From God it is that strength must be had, it is his power alone that can support us against the power of Sin. And prayer is the means of obtaining it. This was the course that *Paul* took when he was troubled with that thorn in his flesh, which Expositors generally interpret to be some strong Motions and Inclinations in him to some foul Sin. *For this, saith the Text, he besought the Lord thrice, that is oftentimes.* And though he did not presently obtain a full deliverance, yet did he receive strength sufficient to resist them, so that he could not be overcome by them.

If we in like manner shall go unto God by Prayer for his help, laying open our condition, and
complaining

complaining to him thereof ; we shall for the present receive strength sufficient to resist, and in God's due time deliverance from our iniquities.

VI. *Act Faith in Christ for the mortifying thy sinful Lusts and Corruptions.* To this end,

1. *Be sensible that thou art in thy self; weak, and unable to grapple with thy Lusts.* Thou must despair of thine own strength, e're thou shalt take hold on the strength of the Lord. Thou must be beaten out of thy self confidence, e're thou wilt go unto Christ, when thou seest thou art weak, thou wilt turn to the strong hold.

2. *Believe that Christ is able to succour and help thee, in him doth all fulness dwell.* As he hath a fulness of Grace in his Heart, so fulness of power in his Hand, whereby he is able to kill all thine Enemies. Sin is mighty, but Christ is mightier. The Devil is strong, but Christ is stronger than he.

3. *Believe that Christ is, as able, so willing, to subdue thine iniquities.* Thine Enemies are his Enemies, and he will have their death : if thou be a Believer ; he hath undertaken for thee. He is thy great high Priest, and thy Lord and King ; and hereupon, not only by his mercifulness, and kindness ; but by his office and interest he stands engaged to pity and relieve thee : he will not be unfaithful to his trust, nor deaf to his own bowels, which plead with him to save and help thee.

4. *By Faith cast thy self upon Jesus Christ, rest upon his power and goodness for his help and strength.* 'Tis here in regard of Christ's power, as in regard of his promises. As our resting and relying upon his promises in a time of danger and distress, makes them our own : So our resting and relying upon Christ's power for help and support, doth make it our own.

5. *By Faith wait upon Christ in expectation of relief and succour against the working and stirring of thy corruptions.* Though relief come in but slowly from him, yet wait for it, because it will most surely come in the most seasonable time. Hereby wilt thou ingage Christ to appear for thy help. For as nothing doth more ingage the Heart of a Man to be helpful to another, than an expectation of help from him: So certainly the raising up thine Heart to an expectation of relief from Christ, must needs be a great Ingagement unto him to assist thee accordingly.

When Christ cured many of their bodily Diseases and Distempers while he lived upon the Earth, we find their cure is still ascribed to their Faith. Now what was their Faith? They believed that Christ was both able and willing to Cure them. & thereupon with confidence went unto him for Cure and so drew vertue from him accordingly. This you may see in the poor Woman that had an Issue of Blood twelve years, who came behind Christ and said, *Mat. 9. 20. If I may but touch the Hem of his Garment, I shall be whole.* To whom Christ replied *Daughter be of good Comfort, thy Faith hath made thee whole.* This is written, as all other Scripture is, for our learning, to teach & instruct us, what course to take for the curing of our spiritual Maladies & Diseases.

Hast thou any foul Issue of Worldliness and Covetousness; of pride or forwardness, of passion or envy, or the like, running upon thee? And wouldst thou be cured of them? Do as that poor Woman did: Go unto Christ, set thy Faith at work on him; believe his power and willingness, let thy Faith touch but the Hem of his Garment, lay hold on him, cast thy self on his Blood and Bowels, wait at his Door, resolving not to return without a gracious answer, and then see if this be
not

not his answer, *Son be thou of good comfort thy sins are forgiven, be thou cleansed of all thy corruptions; thy Faith hath made thee whole.*

Having shewed the means whereby the work of Mortification may be effected; I come now to shew the manner how it ought to be performed.

1. *Our Mortification must be speedy;* Begin to day, let the Axe be presently laid to the Root of these Trees, and whenever you feel the Devil at work, blowing up the Coals of Lusts, be instantly in Arms, giving not time to Sin, to get head upon thee, resist it in its first motions and risings. Delays herein are very dangerous. That Lust which at first may easily be overcome, afterwards will hardly be kept under.

Why should we not be as wise for our Souls, as we are for our bodies? Who having Fire cast into his Bosom or House, will not presently cast it out, and quench it? Woe to those Fools who let alone these hellish Fires, and trifle so long, till it hath gotten the Mastery? You whose Lusts are through your own neglect gotten up into a Flame, fear least it be too late to quench them: fear least these fires having been neglected so long, should now burn to the bottom of Hell.

Vain, wicked, wanton thoughts, are evil Seeds sown in our Hearts by our Adversary the Devil, which if they be let alone, will invisibly grow up first into a Blade, than into an Ear, and so bring forth a dismal Harvest of Wickedness and Wrath. And therefore our wisest course must needs be, so soon as they are sown speedily to weed and pull them up by the Roots. To which agreeth that of an Antient. *Vitia corporis non sunt sinenda coalescere; sed in exordiis statim enecando sunt.* Hilar. Enarat. in Psal. 36, *We must not suffer those fleshly vices to grow*

grow and encrease, but rather destroy them in their first beginnings.

2. Our Mortification must be willing and voluntary, not forced and constrained. The Mariner in a Storm casteth away his Goods, because he dares keep them no longer; yet still his heart goeth after them. And this is all the Mortification of the most, they will cast off their transgressions because they dare do no other. Then only are we sincere in this work, when our hearts are in the first in all that opposition we make against our Sins, when we pray against them heartily, when we watch, and wrestle, and strive and resist them with all our hearts, when our very Souls long to see the Blood of our Lusts; and if it were possible we might with safety, yet our hatred against them would not suffer them to live. They are like to do something to purpose against sin, whose hearts do give the first charge upon them.

3. Our Mortification must be *universal*, extending it self to all our sinful Lusts, with a sincere purpose not to bear with our selves in any known sin. For most certain it is that true Mortification, and an advised remaining in the practice of any known sin, cannot possibly stand together. Therefore the Prophet *David*, to testify the Truth of his Mortification saith, *Psal. 119. 101. I have refrained my feet, not, from one or two, but from every evil way*, he did not willingly bear with himself in the practice of any one Sin; well knowing, every Sin to be a Transgression of the Law. These two Words, *ἁμαρτία* and *ἁμαρτία*, Sin and Transgression are convertible. *Whoever committeth Sin*, saith the Beloved Disciple *John*; *1 John 3. 4. transgresseth the Law, for Sin is the Transgression of the Law*, yea, *every sin*, and so makes us liable to the Wrath of God, to all Judgments and Plagues here, and

and to eternal Damnation hereafter. God will not spare that Soul, that will have any one of his Sins spared to him. He that would have one sin spared, would have another, and another, if it served his turn. He that would not have all of Christ, would in truth have none of him. And he that would not be rid of all sin, has no sincere mind to be rid of any.

Christ will have all or nothing; every duty must be done, or as good you did none; every sin must be left or as good you kept them all. Canst thou let all sin go but this one? even this must go too, or thy life must go for it. O Friend, set thy self against every sin, great and small, open and secret, carnal and spiritual! Set thy self against them heartily, be willing to prosper and overcome; and set upon them speedily, let no iniquity live a day longer, nor sleep a night more in quiet with thee (only remembering to go forth against them in the strength of the Lord) and then we shall quickly find thee to be one of Christ's mortified ones, who as thou art dead with Christ, shalt certainly live with Christ, and reign with Christ to all Eternity.

THE CONTENTS.

Chap. 1.	T HE Exposition and Observations arising out of the First and Second Verses.	page 1
Chap. 2.	The Exposition and Observations arising out of the third Verse.	1
Chap. 3.	Of the Nature of Regeneration, what it is.	16
Chap. 4.	Of the Parts of Regeneration, and Causes concurring therunto.	21
Chap. 5.	Sheweth the Reasons why Regeneration is necessary to Salvation.	23
Chap. 6.	An Use of Exhortation to endeavour after Regeneration, with quickning motives therunto.	28
Chap. 7.	Sheweth the miserable and dreadful Condition of the Unregenerate in their life-time.	34
Chap. 8.	Sheweth the miserable and dreadful Condition of the Unregenerate at their Death.	41
Chap. 9.	Sheweth the miserable and dreadful Condition of the Unregenerate after their Death.	47
Chap. 10.	Sheweth the miserable and dreadful Condition of the regenerate after the Day of Judgment.	59
Chap. 11.	Sheweth that there is hope of mercy for the worst of Sinners.	67
Chap. 12.	Sheweth the Duties to be practised in order to your Regeneration.	79
Chap. 13.	Several Objections of carnal and unregenerate Men, against the Use of the forementioned Means, Answered.	100
Chap. 14.	The Second Branch of the Use of Exhortation unto the Regenerate.	107
Chap. 15.	An Exhortation to bless God, for the Work of Regeneration, and to walk worthy thereof.	116
Chap. 16.	Sheweth the singular good things, which the Regenerate ought to do above others.	122
Chap. 17.	Of embracing every opportunity of doing and receiving Good.	124
Chap. 18.	Of performing good duties after a right manner.	126
Chap. 19.	Of walking Circumspectly and Exactly.	131
Chap. 20.	Of the danger of covetousness, as being the Root of all Evil.	139
Chap. 21.	Of living by Faith in God's Promises.	145
Chap. 22.	Of Heavenly-mindedness.	151
Chap. 23.	Of Mortification.	160

FINIS.

10
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60
61
62
63
64
65
66
67
68
69
70
71
72
73
74
75
76
77
78
79
80
81
82
83
84
85
86
87
88
89
90
91
92
93
94
95
96
97
98
99
100

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